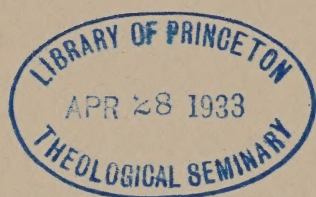


# The Hutterian Brethren

A Story of Martyrdom and Loyalty

---

JOHN HORSCH



Division BX8129

Section .H8H8









THE HUTTERIAN BRETHREN

1528—1931

STUDIES IN  
ANABAPTIST AND MENNONITE HISTORY

---

TWO CENTURIES OF AMERICAN MENNONITE LITERATURE, 1727-1928\*

By *Harold S. Bender*

THE HUTTERIAN BRETHREN, 1528-1931\*

By *John Horsch*

CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF THE MENNONITES OF ILLINOIS\*

By *Harry F. Weber*

PACIFISM AMONG THE MENNONITES, AMISH MENNONITES, AND  
SCHWENKFELDERS OF PENNSYLVANIA TO 1783

By *Wilbur J. Bender*

LIFE AND LETTERS OF CONRAD GREBEL

By *Harold S. Bender, Ernst Correll, and Edward Yoder*

Other volumes to be arranged.

---

\* Now published.



# Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History

EDITED BY

HAROLD S. BENDER, B. D. (Garrett), TH. M., M. A. (Princeton)  
ERNST CORRELL, PH. D. (Munich)      SILAS HERTZLER, PH. D. (Yale)  
EDWARD YODER, PH. D. (Pennsylvania)

---

No. 2

The Hutterian Brethren 1528—1931

A Story of Martyrdom and Loyalty

Published by

The Mennonite Historical Society

Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana

1931







# The Hutterian Brethren

## 1528--1931

A Story of Martyrdom and Loyalty

By JOHN HORSCH

Author of *A Brief History of Christianity; Menno Simons, His Life, Labors, and Teachings; Infant Baptism, Its Origin Among Protestants, etc.*

Published by  
The Mennonite Historical Society  
Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana  
1931

COPYRIGHT 1931

By THE MENNONITE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, U. S. A.

Press of the  
Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania  
*Printed in United States of America*



## FOREWORD

Our series, *Studies in Anabaptist and Mennonite History*, presents as its first treatment of an original, genuine Anabaptist group John Horsch's *Hutterian Brethren*. No other section of the Anabaptist movement represents so faithfully its original life and program to present-day scholarship. No other group has so fully preserved the spirit of the Reformation. It has even created a living modern replica of the life of that long ago day in the new Hutterian community recently established near NeuhoF (Fulda), in Hessen-Nassau, Germany.

Aside from this living spirit to which John Horsch's account testifies, this number of the *Studies* throws a very interesting light on the economic and social aspects of original Anabaptism in spite of the fact that the work appears as a contribution to church history and not as a socio-economic study. Bertha W. Clark in the University of Chicago *Journal of Political Economy* (1924) has described the modern Hutterian Brotherhood from the latter point of view, as the German economist, Robert Liefmann, of the University of Freiburg i. B., had previously done in the *Jahrbuecher fuer Nationaloekonomie und Statistik* (1908). Both scholars in a striking way come to the conclusion that the religious faith of the Hutterian group has been the normative factor in its life. Those who have had the opportunity to study at first hand the documentary sources of the Hutterites and of other Anabaptist groups or who have come into personal touch with them will not be surprised at these conclusions. In the face of recent American publications on the so-called "social origins" of religious denominations, it might be of value to suggest that the Hutterian phenomenon, past and present, should be in-

## FOREWORD

vestigated as a test-case by those who proclaim with such assurance that economic determinism has shaped religious organizations. A thorough study of this sort might at least result in the observation that neither religion nor history as such permit this type of simplification of interpretation.

A diligent reconstruction of the economic and social organization of the first Hutterian century—approximately the period of original settlement in Moravia—would also furnish valuable data on various problems in economic history. It is doubtful whether equally valuable data of such a vivid character could be collected as readily anywhere else.

When the Hutterian community was first established, "money economy" of a crude type was just being developed in Europe. At the same time "price economy" was becoming more intensified in such a way as to revolutionize traditional socio-economic relationships. The sudden influx into Europe of a large amount of gold and silver from the newly discovered Americas added a virulent factor to the already changing conditions and caused a continuous rise in prices. The appearance of Anabaptism against this background has at times led to absurd interpretations yet little attention has been given to the formation of an Anabaptist group such as the Hutterites on a communistic basis although it truly offers a promising chapter in the history of the early sixteenth century. The program of the Hutterites manifested a distinctly constructive character in the midst of the disintegration of their day. Apparently the Hutterian Brethren succeeded in continuing and improving within their non-pecuniary households (*Bruderhoeffe*) the achievements of their epoch.

Numerous extant writings such as those referred to by our author (pages 17f, 116ff, and *passim*) describe the skill and acknowledged success of the Brethren. Professor Johann Loserth of the University of Graz in Austria, in many of his articles in the *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, and Dr. Robert Fried-



## FOREWORD

mann of Vienna, in *Der Wiener Zeitschrift fuer Volkskunde* and the *Archiv fuer Reformationsgeschichte*, point to extensive archival sources where detailed information can be secured. Of particular interest are the "regulations" which were issued by the managers of the household. These regulations governed the technical processes used in Hutterian industry and prescribed the standard of excellence for the products of the astonishingly great number of trades conducted by the Hutterites. The Anabaptist refugees from the various countries of Western Europe who established their communistic settlement in Moravia, naturally pooled the technical experiences which they had accumulated. Thus they created an extraordinary type of workmanship which the policy of mercantilistic princes everywhere, centuries later, tried to attain by summoning experts from foreign lands. The care which the Hutterites took in educating their youth, apparently with a view to their vocational training, is another amazing feature of their conscious endeavor to maintain progressive standards in spite of an environment far below the general level of their achievements.

It is clear that a definite rational attitude governed the "worldly" activities of the Hutterian communities. Their industrial organization does not smack of medieval guild traditionalism with its tendency to guarantee a certain satisfactory status for life and work. There seems to be no cultivation of personal pride in individual "master" achievements. Yet the economic record of the entire group reveals a high degree of efficiency much like that which emanates from the production statistics of a prosperous modern industrial corporation. The Hutterian households in their group activity as well as in the activities of members who were functioning as stewards, millers, building contractors, etc., in the services of feudal lords, furnish remarkable examples of the possibilities of a slightly technical age under the urge of religious discipline. Max Weber in his search for examples of "pro-

## FOREWORD

testant" influences in the development of modern capitalistic industry could have found an "ideal type" among these communistic Hutterites, who in their sober "worldly" labors were intent only on serving God and "working out their soul's salvation."

The use of money by Hutterian groups is another indication of rational methods. While pecuniary relationships were eliminated within the households, the money income from sales of their products and from outside services was deposited with the "manager." He was the purchasing agent and the procurer of raw material. The suspicion that the Hutterites were hoarding treasures, to which Horsch refers, page 139f, reveals upon further investigation that a "capital reserve" was carefully built up in order to protect the group in case of losses through persecution, war, and general depression. It becomes evident that this communistic group naturally developed a financial policy which was rarely conceived in the public finance and administration of that age.

To the economic historian the Hutterian Community during its first century presents a rare mirror of the economic world of that time. Their communistic system which they endeavored to establish and maintain on a high ethical level serves to emphasize the characteristic economic activities and technical organizations of the time. Furthermore the principle of nonresistance as held by the Hutterites brought about a noble social relationship within the comparatively large group which they represented, which was undefiled by political strife and desire for conquest. This fact again serves to clarify the understanding of the character of the Hutterites as "economic men" without competitive interests. Temptations to individualistic acquisitive attitudes were checked or frustrated by religious devotion and strict discipline.

Finally, the sociologist will take notice of the type of social organization cultivated by the Hutterites. Their organi-



## FOREWORD

zation is the most effective solution of the problem of religious communism, the ideal form of "separation from the World." The "communism" of the early church, as recorded in Acts 2, which is often so misunderstood, was a communism of consumption only. The Hutterian Brethren went further. On a higher technical and economic level than primitive Christianity could possibly have operated, they succeeded in establishing a communistic organization of production and consumption under the command and discipline of Christian love and the spirit of their Master. It was a communism, however, which did not mean economic indifference because of its religious fervor, or a purely self-sufficient economy on a reduced standard of living, or the realization of the ideal of the holy life of poverty as practiced by monastic asceticism. As a matter of fact, the Hutterian communities constantly produced a surplus for "foreign" markets and in addition had members hired out to the "world" outside. They "exported" both goods and services. Socially the Hutterian households with their families, each formed a "body politic," providing for the needs of their members under the guidance of religious principles of education, management of production, consumption, trade and social welfare, including medical care and protection of the aged.

No Utopia, not a chiliastic flare, but the positive *Civitas Dei* of Anabaptism, on the basis of a Christian *communis omnium possessio*—this is the Hutterian Brotherhood whose story John Horsch records.

Ernst Correll.

American University  
Washington, D. C.  
October, 1931





## PREFACE

The history of the early Hutterian Brethren is the story of a group of Christians who were determined to give religion its rightful place in their lives by making the religious interest paramount. With a devotion and earnestness which is scarcely paralleled in the history of the Christian church they attempted the restoration of the faith and life of the early church.

Since community of goods is a distinguishing mark of Hutterianism the general reader is apt to associate this Hutterian practice with the type of communism which is to-day forcing itself upon the attention of the world. Through the Bolshevik upheaval in Russia the world finds itself confronted by questions such as these: Is communism as a world order practicable? Is there any foundation to the claim of its advocates that it is the remedy for the social, economic and political ills of the world? The author is of the opinion that the history of the communistic societies, above all that of the oldest and largest of them—the Hutterites—, sheds welcome light on these questions.

Within the last two centuries numerous communistic societies have been established. With few exceptions they have had a short history. Only a small number of such bodies are in existence to-day, and nearly all of these are religious societies, or churches. The numerous non-religious, idealistic communistic organizations have signally failed.

The founders of the latter type of communistic societies believed that the practice of communism would be the greatest boon for the human family. They entertained the fond hope that, after the desirability of such a life had been prac-

## PREFACE

tically demonstrated, people in general would in course of time be persuaded to join the movement, and that the final result would be the realization of the golden age of brotherhood and peace of which they dreamed. But they failed to reckon with the fact that the community life requires self-denial and sacrifice; it involves a restriction of personal liberty. They found by costly experience that in practice such a life differed widely from their preconceived ideas regarding it. Since the need of a sacrificial spirit had been disregarded, the conditions for success were lacking. The founders of idealistic communistic societies were sadly disappointed by the dissatisfaction and dissension which developed within their ranks and which spelled failure for the community life. They had failed to consider that the spirit of self-denial required for such a life is difficult to find among ordinary mortals, particularly apart from a deep and thoroughgoing Christian experience.

The founders and charter members of the first Hutterian congregations were refugees who had endured persecution for their faith and were willing to lay down their lives for it. They were men and women of deep religious conviction and sincere consecration. They identified themselves with the Brotherhood not from self-seeking motives, not to try to get from such a life as much as possible, but on the contrary, to see what it was possible for them to put into a life for the service of God. They were fully determined to make Jesus Christ the master of their lives. For His cause they were resolved to live and die. They saw clearly that willing service to God and man, involving self-denial and sacrifice, is the necessary fruit of true Christian faith, and they believed the community life to be the best outward expression of love toward God and the brethren, a necessary characteristic of true Christianity. In a word, they accepted Hutterianism not



## PREFACE

from self-seeking motives but from the earnest desire to be true followers of the Christ whom they loved.

Christian love was to the Hutterites a blessed reality. Therefore they appreciated and loved this life of fellowship more than an unrestrained life without the communities. When they were ruthlessly driven from their dwellings in Moravia in the persecution of 1535 and again in 1548, their greatest regret was not the untold bodily sufferings they had to undergo but the deprivation of brotherly fellowship. Members of the Church who for any reason had to absent themselves from the Bruderhofs often expressed a longing for these privileges. In the secular communistic societies it was precisely this necessarily close fellowship of the members with each other which was largely responsible for their failure.

It must not be overlooked that the Hutterites in Moravia were really a select group. Professor Johann Loserth has stated the opinion that probably the whole population of the southern half of the province of Moravia would have been absorbed by the Hutterites, had not the Thirty Years' War with its disastrous consequences for the dissenters destroyed their colonies. (*Communisten im sechzehnten und siebzehnten Jahrhundert*, Graz, 1897, p. 7). However, the Hutterites were foreigners in Moravia. The native Moravians were Slavs speaking a Slavic language while the Hutterian colonies consisted of people of Teutonic stock. Apparently few native Slavs were won for Hutterianism. The church chroniclers of the early Hutterian Brethren relate that their messengers of the gospel visited many provinces as far as the German tongue extended, seeking out "those who were willing to amend their lives, were inquirers after the truth and had a zeal for it." The converts to the Hutterian faith came from various provinces of the German Empire, mostly from Württemberg, the land in which a few generations later the

## PREFACE

Pietistic movement found a larger following than in any other province.

The foundations of Hutterianism, then, were wholly religious. Their practice of having all things in common was a success so long as the religious life in the Brotherhood flourished, and consequently Christian love prevailed, manifesting itself in a spirit of humble service. When true Christianity was permitted to wane and depart, the community life became an unbearable burden; it failed utterly. Twice in their history the community of goods was abandoned by the Hutterites through religious decline, to be taken up again through a revival of religion.

The contrasts between Hutterianism and modern "red" communism need scarcely be pointed out. The one is founded on biblical Christianity and is purely religious; the other has developed from bitter class struggle and is of a political, revolutionary nature; it is irreligious and materialistic to the core, manifesting a fiercely militant atheism, an unprecedented hatred of God and all that is divine. The one is entirely voluntary, receiving into membership only those who meet certain religious conditions; the other clearly uses compulsion to accomplish its goal. The communist party in Russia comprises only a small percentage of the population and is to-day ruling that unhappy land with the iron hand of terroristic dictatorship. In a word, the "red" communism is in principle and method the very reverse of Hutterianism.

It may be observed in passing that, as concerns material possessions and stewardship, there is an obvious discrepancy between the teaching of Jesus and the teaching and practice of the Christian Church. Christian theology has failed to recognize the fact that in the acquisition of wealth there is a point beyond which the Christian cannot consistently go. Falling back on Old Testament standards the Church has officially



## PREFACE

explained away the clear teaching of the New Testament Scriptures on wealth as expressed particularly by Jesus Himself. Christian stewardship has little meaning if it does not include the idea that the true steward of God will cease to lay up treasures on earth for his own benefit after having accumulated sufficiently that he and those dependent on him can live from the income derived from it. It is generally agreed that the accumulation of great wealth in the hands of comparatively few is from various viewpoints fruitful of evil; yet the Church has no clear testimony against hoarding. She is engaged in a wordy war for peace but fails to lay hands on the principal cause of war: Greed. In regard to the accumulation of wealth there is scarcely a difference between the Church and the respectable world. By ignoring Jesus' pertinent teaching the Church has put a sharp weapon of attack in the hands of her antagonists who refuse to accept the view that she is in this regard following the footsteps of Him whose kingdom is not of this world.

The history of Hutterianism is as yet a *terra incognita* even to the world of learning. None of the books in the English language on the present-day communistic societies mentions the Hutterites. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* has information on various other far smaller and less significant communistic societies but does not so much as mention the Hutterites. The history of this church is worth the attention of the general reader. It reveals the power and beauty of true Christian consecration. It shows that communism is practicable only when it is preceded by thorough Christianization.

I am indebted to Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, publishers of the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, for their kind permission to use my series of articles on Hutterian history which was published in that journal under the same title which the present book carries. The series consisted of four articles which

## PREFACE

appeared in the *Review* for April and July, 1928, and January and October, 1929 (volume II, numbers 2 and 4; volume III, numbers 1 and 4). The present volume consists in substance of these articles somewhat revised and enlarged.

Scottdale, Pennsylvania.  
October, 1931.

John Horsch.

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE HUTTERIAN BROTHERHOOD TO 1593	1
Introductory .....	1
Menno Simons .....	6
Origin of the Hutterian Church .....	6
Jacob Hutter. Division of the Church at Austerlitz .....	8
Toleration Granted by the Lords of Kaunitz .....	10
The Views of the Brethren on Toleration—The Cause of Their Persecution .....	12
The Principal Reason for the Toleration of the Brethren in Moravia	13
The First Great Persecution in Moravia .....	15
Moravia the Land of Religious Freedom—An Ideal Christian Community .....	18

## CHAPTER II

LIFE, ACTIVITIES AND SUFFERINGS OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN MORAVIA .....	21
The Life of the Hutterian Brethren in Moravia .....	20
"A City Set Upon a Hill" .....	24
A Missionary Church .....	27
Testimony of Fischer and Others Concerning the Life and Character of the Brethren .....	29
The Schools of the Brethren .....	33
The Physicians of the Brethren .....	37
A Church "Under the Cross" .....	39
The Story of Steinabrunn .....	44
A Stain on the History of Christendom .....	47



## CONTENTS

### CHAPTER III

PERSECUTION AND SUPPRESSION OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN MORAVIA. SETTLEMENT IN HUNGARY AND TRAN- SYLVANIA, 1593-1662 .....	51
Tribulations of the Brotherhood in the First Years of the Thirty Years' War .....	53
A Forced Colonization .....	56
Expulsion of the Brethren From Moravia .....	57
The Brethren in Hungary .....	63
An Author of the Seventeenth Century on the Life of the Brethren in Hungary .....	66
Colonies at Bodok and Mannheim .....	68

### CHAPTER IV

THE DECLINE AND DESTRUCTION OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA .....	70
The Abandonment of the Community of Goods and its Causes .....	75
The Great Persecution in Hungary .....	79
The Persecution Begins in Earnest .....	83
The Brotherhood in Flight .....	85
A Number of Brethren Martyred .....	87
The Jesuit Delpini Among the Brethren at Alwintz in Transylvania .....	89
The Further Course of the Persecution .....	92
Persecution at Creutz in Transylvania .....	95
Good Counsel from an Apostate .....	97

### CHAPTER V

THE RENEWAL OF THE BROTHERHOOD AND FLIGHT TO WALLACHIA .....	99
The Flight of the Brotherhood from Transylvania .....	103
The Brotherhood in Wallachia. Migration to Russia .....	106

## CONTENTS

### CHAPTER VI

THE HUTTERIAN BROTHERHOOD IN RUSSIA AND IN AMERICA	107
Connections of the Brotherhood with their Friends in Hungary and Carinthia .....	108
An Audience Granted by the Emperor .....	108
A Visit by a Member of the Moravian Church of Germany in Levar	112
The Brotherhood in Reditschewa and on the Molotschna River .....	113
The Brethren in America .....	115

### CHAPTER VII

THE FAITH AND PRINCIPLES OF THE HUTTERIAN BRETHERN	117
The Scriptures in Hutterian Theology .....	119
Sin and Salvation .....	123
The Need of a Consistent Christian Life .....	125
The Church .....	128
The Community of Goods .....	131
The Principle of Nonresistance .....	133
Concerning the Making of Swords .....	137
Concerning Taxes .....	137
Whether a Christian May Use the Law .....	138
The Supposed Treasure of the Hutterites .....	139
A True Brotherhood .....	141
Separation Vs. Divorce .....	142
Uncompromising Religious Attitude .....	143
Religious Certainty .....	144
Church Discipline .....	145
A Modern Writer on the Present-Day Organization of the Hutterites	147
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	151
LIST OF HUTTERIAN BRUDERHOFS .....	157
MAPS OF MORAVIA AND ADJOINING PROVINCES .....	160
INDEX .....	163





# CHAPTER I

## GENERAL HISTORY OF THE HUTTERIAN BROTHERHOOD TO 1593

### INTRODUCTORY

The Hutterian Brotherhood is named after Jacob Hutter who suffered martyrdom by being burned alive at the stake on February 26, 1536, at Innsbruck in the Tyrol. This Brotherhood descends from the Swiss Brethren who constitute the oldest of the "Anabaptist" bodies.

It is now widely recognized that the history of the Anabaptists, including that of the Hutterites, has not been given the attention which it merits. The Anabaptist movement has been largely ignored or misjudged. Such a widely used, comprehensive textbook on general church history as the one by Bishop John Fletcher Hurst does not even mention this movement or any of its leaders. Various works on the history of the Reformation give it but the scantest notice. An increasing number of influential historians, on the other hand, recognize this movement as one of exceptional inner strength.

To speak of Anabaptism as a movement may seem to indicate that all Anabaptist sects, groups, and parties were virtually a unit in faith and practice. Such an assumption, however, would be far from the truth. All who disowned infant baptism and practised the baptism of believers were called Anabaptists (*Wiedertäufer*), i. e., rebaptizers by their opponents. Among those who were given this name were various fanatical and revolutionary sects, such as those led by Augustin Bader, John of Leiden (in Münster), Jan van Batenburg and David Joris, which in doctrine and practice differed radically from the Swiss Brethren, the Hutterites

and the Mennonites. The latter three groups show a striking agreement in doctrine and practice. They maintained themselves despite the severest persecutions, while the fanatical sects just named, excepting the Davidites which were always numerically weak, had a very short history. For centuries the leading theologians of Protestantism asserted that the Swiss Brethren, Hutterites and Mennonites were in the final analysis the same sect as the Münsterites. The nickname "Anabaptists" was forced upon them against their continued protests, though this name had, through the excesses of the Münsterites, become a stench in the nostrils of Western Christendom.

The founders of the Swiss Brethren Church, Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz and others, had been zealous followers of Ulrich Zwingli until he, contrary to his earlier reformation program, decided in favor of a course which led to a union of church and state, involving compulsory church membership. At the same time Zwingli began to defend infant baptism, a practice which, according to his own statement, he had formerly not favored.<sup>1</sup> The question of baptism—infant baptism and compulsory membership on the one hand, or believers' baptism and the voluntary principle on the other—became the great point of controversy between Zwingli and the dissenters.<sup>2</sup> After the civil authorities had decided in

---

1. *Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke*, vol. IV, Leipzig, 1927, p. 228.

2. While in Zwingli's public debates with the leaders of the Brethren he discussed with them infant baptism only, in private discussions and in his writings he accused them of various offensive unscriptural views and practices. He charged them with teaching the doctrine of sinless perfection, and asserted that they claimed to have had new revelations on which they founded their teachings, rather than on Scripture. He often made the assertion that their supposed principle of nonresistance was nothing more than a cloak to hide their sinister designs against the government, and that they were planning to commit all sorts of sins and crimes, and therefore would do away with the government; that they were guilty of appalling misdeeds, and some of their practices approached free love, etc. Zwingli could not make these supposed teachings and practices of the Brethren the subjects of public discussion. He was aware that they would only welcome the opportunity to protest their innocence, so

favor of Zwingli and made infant baptism compulsory, Grebel and his friends, in the third week of January, 1525, began the practice of believers' baptism, and organized themselves as a church.<sup>3</sup> Thus they forsook and renounced the

---

much the more as they found it impossible to publish anything in print. In his last book against them (the *Elenchus*) he says that he could bring abundant proof for his accusations if necessity demanded. Zwingli evidently believed that proof was not required by those for whom his book was intended. Yet his information was unquestionably based on hearsay. Repeatedly he forgets himself and, contradicting his severe accusations, says that the points of difference between himself and the Brethren were of little importance. He wrote, e. g.: "But that no one may suppose that the dissension is in regard to doctrines which concern the inner man, let it be said that they make us difficulty only because of questions such as these: whether infants or adults should be baptized and whether a Christian may be a magistrate." (*Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. III, Leipzig, 1914, p. 872, cf. *ibid.*, p. 406.) The Reformed church historian, Professor Paul Wernle, of the University of Basel, wrote: "Zwingli failed to realize how great a wrong he did the Anabaptists (the Swiss Brethren) by heaping on their heads all shameful accusations." (*Der Evangelische Glaube nach den Hauptschriften der Reformatoren*, Vol. II, Zwingli, Tübingen, 1919, p. 355). Some of these unfounded charges are being repeated on the authority of Zwingli by historians of to-day.

3. The book, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, by H. Richard Niebuhr (New York, 1929), defends the thesis that the rise of the Christian denominations, and of the Anabaptists in particular can be traced to social and economic roots. Again, from the hypothesis that the determining factors in the rise of the denominations were social and economic, a certain Socialist author has made the deduction that social and economic considerations on the part of the church leaders constitute the life nerve of religion, and that the churches would soon pass into history if pecuniary recompense were withheld from the preachers. The last mentioned writer is evidently unaware that certain groups of churches have existed for centuries without a salaried, or even a supported ministry. Now, the Swiss Brethren, the first or oldest Anabaptist sect, organized themselves as a church in the face of threatening social and economic ostracism, and they consistently stood for the principle of nonresistance. The supposition that they constituted a disinherited class beforehand is contrary to fact. They would have taken the assertion that the roots of their movement were of a social and economic nature as a grave slander and insult. Within a short time they were indeed outlawed by the Imperial Reichstag. In fact, their persecution and banishment had actually begun before their withdrawal from the national church. For a time those whom the officers of the law could find were put to death without any legal formality or sentence. They were indeed "a disfranchised group," "a disinherited class," but, as already intimated, this was the consequence of their intended and afterwards



Roman Catholic Church—not the Reformed Church, which did not yet exist. The mass was abolished in Zurich on Easter of 1525, and this date marks the birthday of the Reformed Church in Zurich. The Hutterian Brethren differed from the Swiss Brethren (to-day called Mennonites) mainly by their practice of “having all things common.”

The communism of the Hutterites, it may be noted in passing, differs vitally and radically from the modern “Red” communism.<sup>4</sup> The Hutterian community of goods is rooted and grounded in the Christian faith and is believed to be the necessary fruit and manifestation of brotherly love; it is religious, or Christian, to the core. Its aim is the realization of a true Christian church, a worthy embodiment of Christ-like brotherhood.<sup>5</sup>

In the first decades of the Reformation period there existed in the province of Moravia (at that time a part of Austria, now of Czechoslovakia) besides the Hutterites two other similar communistic societies, namely the so-called Ga-

---

effected withdrawal from the state church. Dr. Niebuhr speaks of “violent revolution” brought about by the Anabaptists in their earlier period. However, both the Swiss Brethren and the Hutterites existed as denominations before the rise of the revolutionary Münsterite sect, and this sect differed from them on some of the most fundamental points of faith and practice. A contemporary Hutterian chronicler says of the leaders and charter members of the first congregation of the Swiss Brethren with reference to their renunciation of the state church: “Flesh and blood and human forwardness (i. e., social, economic, and similar considerations) did not by any means lead them in taking this step; for they foresaw what they would be called upon to suffer and endure in consequence.” (*Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder*. Herausgegeben von den Hutterischen Brüdern in Amerika. Macleod, Alta., Canada, und Wien, 1923, p. 35).

4. The modern communists, it may be worth noticing, are true disciples of the greatest of all socialistic writers, Karl Marx. On the attitude of the Socialists of the continent of Europe, and of Germany in particular, toward religion, compare, Piechowski, P., *Proletarischer Glaube; die religiöse Gedankenwelt der organisierten deutschen Arbeiterschaft nach sozialistischen und kommunistischen Selbstzeugnissen*, Berlin, 1928.
5. The Hutterian Brethren do not advocate communism as a world order. They believe, on the basis of an experience extending over centuries, that communism as a world system is impracticable.

brielite and Philippite Brethren. They were named after Gabriel Ascherham, of Schärding in Bavaria, and Philip Blauärmel, or Plener, of Strasburg. The church which is known to-day by the name of Hutterian Brethren constituted the strictest group of the three. With this group the two factions just named finally united. Besides these three groups there were in Moravia also congregations of the Swiss Brethren.

The large Anabaptist church at Nikolsburg in Moravia, in contrast to all other Anabaptist groups in that province, approved of military service and differed from them on a few other points. The ruler of the principality of which Nikolsburg was the center, Leonhard von Liechtenstein, was a member of this church. Its founder and leader was Dr. Balthasar Hubmaier.<sup>6</sup> The Anabaptist congregation at Nikolsburg had for a short time a membership estimated at from 6,000 to 12,000.<sup>7</sup> After his imprisonment by the Austrian authorities, in the summer of 1527, Hubmaier offered to "stand still" as regards the practice of baptism and the Lord's supper until a general council (of western Christendom)

---

6. On Hubmaier compare Loserth, J., *Doctor Balthasar Hubmaier und die Anfänge der Wiedertaufe in Mähren*, Brünn, 1893; Mau, W., *Balthasar Hubmaier*, Berlin und Leipzig, 1912; Sachsse, C., *Balthasar Hubmaier als Theologe*, Berlin, 1914; Schreiber, H., *Balthasar Hubmaier, der Stifter der Wiedertäufer auf dem Schwarzwalde, Taschenbuch für Geschichte und Alterthum in Süddeutschland*, Freiburg i. B., 1839; Vedder, H. C., *Balthasar Hubmaier, the Leader of the Anabaptists*, New York, 1905.

7. Hans Schlaffer, who was executed with the sword at Schwatz in the Tyrol, on February 4, 1528, said: "Many were baptized at Nikolsburg but not all walked in newness of life. Baptism on confession of faith was administered in this way: A sermon was preached and then all who came forward and desired it were baptized. Not every one was in particular examined and questioned." (Loserth, J., *Doctor Balthasar Hubmaier*, p. 149). Hans Nadler stated in January, 1529, at Erlangen: "He had been at Nikolsburg below Vienna for fourteen days. Seventy-two persons were baptized in the church building in one day. Baptism was practised but there was no Christian order such as is described in the Acts of the Apostles." (Cornelius, C. A., *Geschichte des Münsterischen Aufruhrs*. Zweites Buch: *Die Wiedertaufe*, Leipzig, 1860, p. 281).

would decide the points under dispute. Evidently the majority of Hubmaier's congregation at Nikolsburg followed him in taking an attitude of "standing still" as concerned the practice of the Christian ordinances in the organization of churches. This led to the extinction of that church in a comparatively short time.<sup>8</sup>

#### MENNO SIMONS

Regarding the relation of the Hutterites and Swiss Brethren to Menno Simons there has been obvious confusion. The opinion has been frequently expressed that at the time when Menno Simons renounced the Roman Catholic Church (1536) only a remnant of Anabaptists were left, having escaped death in the persecutions, and these were gathered and organized by him.<sup>9</sup> The erroneousness of this opinion is clear from the fact that the Hutterites were left untouched by Menno Simons' influence. The same is true of the Swiss Brethren. Only after a half century after the rise of the Swiss Brethren were some of Menno Simons' principal writings translated into German and made accessible to the Swiss. His labors and influence were confined to the Netherlands, North Germany, and Holstein. The Swiss Brethren, however, substantially agreed with the followers of Menno Simons in faith and practice, and later adopted the Mennonite name. The great majority of the Mennonites of America are descendants of the Swiss Brethren.

#### ORIGIN OF THE HUTTERIAN CHURCH

The founders of the Hutterian Brotherhood were Swiss Brethren refugees who had come from various parts of South Germany and the Tyrol to Nikolsburg in Moravia, having received word that Anabaptists were tolerated in that

---

8. A remnant of the Nikolsburg Anabaptists united with the Sabbatarians.

9. The most recent book, apparently, to make a statement to this effect is, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, by H. Richard Niebuhr, New York, 1929, p. 38.



principality. Since they differed on a number of points from the church founded by Hubmaier, they met separately for worship.<sup>10</sup> Within a short time they were informed by Leonhard von Liechtenstein that they could not remain at Nikolsburg unless they attended the divine services held by the recognized pastors of the place. In consequence a company of between 200 and 300 persons, under Jacob Widemann, departed from Nikolsburg in the spring of the year 1528. They first encamped in a vacated village named Bogenitz. Here they chose "ministers of temporal needs." "These men spread a cloak before the people," says the chronicler of the Brethren, "and every one laid down on it his earthly possessions unconstrained and with a willing mind according to the teaching of the prophets and apostles." This was the beginning of communism by this brotherhood, the organization of the first Bruderhof.<sup>11</sup> However, a partial community of goods had been practiced by Jacob Widemann and his congregation before their departure from Nikolsburg. One of the complaints made by Widemann concerning the large Anabaptist congregation at that place was that "they do not open their homes to the pilgrims and refugees from other countries,"

- 
10. Caspar Braitmichel, the chronicler of the early Hutterites, says that Jacob Widemann and his followers found in the church at Nikolsburg (which, after Hubmaier's imprisonment, was under the care of Hans Spittelmeyer) "great disorder as regards brotherly reproof and discipline (Matt. 18:15-17), and they could not agree with them in point of carrying or using the sword, giving taxes for war (Widemann and later the Hutterites taught the duty of paying regular taxes) and other things which were contrary to their understanding." (*Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder*, p. 38). When Widemann and others of this group were asked by Leonhard von Liechtenstein why they met separately for worship, their reply was, "Because they found and saw with him (Liechtenstein) and his church great disorder in many things; they did not give shelter to the refugees and strangers, defended the sword and war taxes, and in other points did not walk in accordance with the Word of truth." (*Ibid.*, p. 39).
  11. To Jacob Widemann must be ascribed the initiative in taking steps which finally led to the introduction of community of goods. Apparently he was a man of intense conviction. He was executed for his faith in Vienna, in 1535 or 1536.

most of whom arrived penniless. The numbers of the refugees were so great that to care for them properly required a practice of near-communism.<sup>12</sup>

From Bogenitz the Brethren proceeded to Austerlitz upon the invitation of the civil authorities of that place, the Lords von Kaunitz.

#### JACOB HUTTER. DIVISION OF THE CHURCH AT AUSTERLITZ

In the year 1529 Jacob Hutter, of Moos near Bruneck in the Tyrol, a minister of a group of Brethren in that province, was sent by his people to visit and counsel with the

- 
12. The Swiss Brethren neither defended nor practiced community of goods. However, they taught the principle of stewardship, the need of consecration in the use of material things. Martin Bucer, the Zwinglian reformer of Strasburg, criticised the Brethren for their opinion that Christians may not live in luxury while there are those who do not have the necessities of life and whom they could help. In one of the old Hutterian books the interesting statement is found that among the Swiss brethren baptism was administered to those "who consecrate themselves with all their temporal possessions to God and his people." (*Verantwortung den Schweizern getan auf ihr Begehren*. 1567. Book in manuscript). Candidates for membership in the Swiss Brethren congregation at Strasburg (1557) were asked among other questions, "whether they are willing, if necessity requires, to give all their possessions for the church and its needs, and not to fail to help any member that is in need, if they are able to render aid." (Hulshof, A., *Geschiedenis van de Doopsgezinden to Straatsburg van 1525 tot 1557*, Amsterdam, 1905, p. 214). That this was the position of the Swiss Brethren is corroborated by the testimony of Heinrich Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli as the head of the state church of Zurich, who says that, according to their teaching, "every good Christian is under duty before God to use out of love all his possessions in supplying the necessities of life to any of his brethren." (*Der Widertöufferen ursprung, fürgang, Secten, Wäsen*, etc., Zurich, 1561, p. 129v). "They did, however, not teach," says the Reformed theologian G. Strasser, "that a Christian must forego private ownership of property, but that he is under obligation to use the income from it for deeds of brotherly love and mercy." (*Der schweizerische Anabaptismus zur Zeit der Reformation*, in *Berner Beiträge*, Bern, 1884, p. 177). Heinrich Seiler, who in 1535 was executed by drowning in Bern, said: "I do not believe it wrong that a Christian has his own property, provided he will do right and share his goods with the needy, for he is nothing more than a steward." (Müller, E., *Geschichte der Bernischen Täufer*, Frauenfeld, 1895, p. 44). On the attitude of the Anabaptists to communism cf. Correll, E. H., *Das schweizerische Täufermennonitentum*, Tübingen, 1925, pp. 15f.

Brethren in Moravia. In the Tyrol the Swiss Brethren doctrine had taken foothold in various districts. George Blau-rock labored in this province and here lost his life as a martyr, being burned at the stake on September 6, 1529 at Klausen.

Jacob Hutter came to Austerlitz in Moravia and united with the church at this place in the name of his people in the Tyrol. After his return to his home land a division took place in the church at Austerlitz. The stricter party, about 150 persons, on January 8, 1531, under the leadership of George Zaunring, moved to Auspitz, another village in the territory of the Lords von Kaunitz.<sup>13</sup> In great poverty they established there a common household (Bruderhof). Jacob Hutter, having again come from the Tyrol, was in 1533 chosen the head pastor<sup>14</sup> of the church at Auspitz. Through the efforts of Hutter<sup>15</sup> and his assistants strict discipline and

- 
13. The Brethren who remained at Austerlitz under Jacob Widemann (called Austerlitz Brethren) were driven out in the persecution of 1535 (to be mentioned directly). Some of them suffered martyrdom. A remnant united with the Hutterites in 1537.
  14. The designation "bishop" was not in use among the Hutterites, presumably for the reason that this title was in their thinking closely associated with Romanism and was not in use among Protestants except in the Church of England (which made no claim of being Protestant) and in the Lutheran Scandinavian countries. Yet the Hutterian Brethren in Moravia and later in Hungary had a new head pastor to whom was entrusted the leadership and spiritual oversight of the whole Brotherhood. Among the Hutterites all ministers and officers were accountable to the congregations and could be deposed in case of unfaithfulness. One of the head pastors, Rudolph Hirtzel, chosen in 1621, was silenced the same year, having acted very unwisely in an important matter.
  15. Of Jacob Hutter's early life nothing is known. Evidently he had attended a good common school for he was able to express himself well in writing. The name Hutter (Huter) means hatter, and hat-making was his earlier occupation. He was a man of firm convictions and deep consecration, of eminent organizing talent and great will power. During his imprisonment in Innsbruck the most cruel torture was employed to force him to recant. "He remained steadfast and true to the faith," says the chronicler, "as a Christian hero. Finally he was, by the evil sons of Caiaphas and Pilate, tied to the stake and burned alive. With great joy he gave his life as a testimony to the truth." Christoph Andreas Fischer, in his book, *Der Hutterischen Widertauffer Taubenkobel*, Ingolstadt,

order were established, particularly respecting community of goods. Two years later, namely about the time when Menno Simons, in the Netherlands, renounced the Roman Catholic Church, Hutter suffered martyrdom.

#### TOLERATION GRANTED BY THE LORDS VON KAUNITZ

As above stated, the Lords von Kaunitz willingly received the Brethren into their territory. From Bogenitz the Brethren had sent four men to Austerlitz to ask permission of the lords to establish a settlement, laying before them a frank statement of the points that had been the cause of their expulsion from Nikolsburg, in particular of their position on the question of paying war taxes "to which the Brethren for conscience' sake could not consent."<sup>16</sup> "The lords expressed their willingness to receive them," says the contemporary chronicler, "and grant them religious liberty. They said, if there were a thousand of them, they would permit them to come. They sent them three wagons to assist them in moving. In other ways also they showed them great kindness." The Brotherhood was given a suitable building site and the necessary building material.

In the matter of the toleration of the Hutterian Brethren there was a great principle at stake. It may be recalled that in those times all civil governments in Christendom insisted on a close union of church and state. Not only the Roman Catholic but also the Lutheran and Zwinglian governments held the principle of the need and rightfulness of such a union. In all countries those who did not adhere to the

---

1607, has a chapter on "The Life of Jacob Hutter," (pp. 55-57), consisting of quotations from a booklet written by an opponent of Hutter, Gabriel Ascherham, entitled, *Anzeigung vom Zwyspalt der gemeyn inn Mähren wie sich der erhebet hat*. The excerpts from this booklet, as quoted by Fischer, give only a few data and these are of doubtful value. Cf. Hege, Art. *Ascherham*, *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, I. Jacob Hutter's sister Agnes died a martyr in Tyrol in 1529.

16. The Hutterian Brethren, being strict adherents to the principle of non-



dominant church were persecuted. In principle every government tolerated only one creed, or church, namely, the one to which the rulers themselves adhered. The Lords von Liechtenstein were no exception to this rule. They apparently did not allow dissenting worship in their territory.<sup>17</sup>

However, the Lords von Kaunitz and a number of other Moravian lords took another attitude on this question. They were evidently of the opinion that adherents to various creeds could well live together under one civil government. They had weighty proof for the wisdom of a political policy of general toleration, since in certain parts of Moravia and Bohemia for a long period churches of the Bohemian Brethren, called Picards, had existed and lived side by side with the Roman Catholic population without disadvantage to the state. In 1511 Lord Ulrich von Kaunitz had permitted Picards to settle in his territory.<sup>18</sup>

---

resistance, declined to pay war taxes. The statement found in Bergmann, C., *Die Täuferbewegung im Kanton Zürich*, Leipzig, 1926, p. 64, that they gave such taxes in 1575 and again in 1579 is due to misunderstanding. Actual military service was never asked of them in Moravia. L. Mueller, (*Der Kommunismus der mährischen Wiedertäufer*, Leipzig, 1927, p. 108) states that in 1741 two brethren were sent by the Church upon demand of the government to serve in the army as hussars. The truth is that the two brethren referred to in the records were sent to confer with the authorities concerning this demand. (See Beck, J., *Die Geschichtsbücher der Wiedertäufer in Oesterreich-Ungarn*, Wien, 1883, p. 572).

17. As previously stated, Hubmaier and the church established by him at Nikolsburg did not accept the principle of nonresistance. Had they shared the position of the Swiss Brethren and of Jacob Widemann on this point, they could not have approved the expulsion of dissenters.
18. The Picards were descendants of the Hussites. After the martyrdom of John Huss, of Bohemia, in 1415, a considerable portion of the Bohemian people disowned the authority of the pope. They succeeded in holding their own against the armies sent against them. After the Hussite wars, churches of the so-called Picards sprang up in Bohemia and Moravia. In spite of repeated severe persecution they maintained themselves down to the eighteenth century when they were reorganized by Count Zinzendorf. To-day they are generally known in America as the Moravian Church.

THE VIEWS OF THE BRETHREN ON TOLERANCE — THE  
CAUSE OF THEIR PERSECUTION

The chief cause of the general persecution of the Hutterian Brethren was their rejection of the principle of a union between church and state, and their disapproval of infant baptism, a practice which was indispensable for the maintenance of the prevailing state-churchism. The civil authorities of every land insisted that all infants born within the borders of the state (except those of Jewish parents) be baptized, and in the Protestant state churches, as well as in the Roman Catholic Church, baptism was, as in apostolic times, considered to be the rite of initiation into the church.<sup>19</sup> According to the teaching of both the Roman Catholic and the Lutheran church regeneration is accomplished through baptism, although Luther believed the efficacy of baptism to be dependent on faith. Baptism was considered the act of Christening, or making Christians. And before the rise of Calvinism exclusion or excommunication of flagrant transgressors was not practised in any of the state churches;<sup>20</sup> hence the whole population of the state, saints and sinners alike, were church members.

The Hutterian Brethren, on the other hand, as well as the Swiss Brethren, rejected the principle of state-churchism. They defended the voluntary principle and disapproved of using force to make the borders of the church coincide with those of the state. In their opinion a state church of this sort could not be a New Testament church. In the place of the practice of making all infants church members, they held that the church should consist of those who personally believed

---

19. At the present time there are a number of prominent denominations which practice infant baptism without considering the baptized infants church members. The membership of these churches consists of such as of their own accord have united with them.

20. The only exception was the state church of Basel where Johannes Oecolampad introduced the practice of church discipline but abandoned it after a short time, finding it impracticable under prevailing circumstances.

in Christ and surrendered themselves to him. They did not recognize infant baptism as scriptural and valid, and therefore baptized those again who had received baptism in their infancy; hence they were called Anabaptists (rebaptizers) though they never owned this name. They disapproved, as we have seen, of the usage of compelling every inhabitant of the state to hold membership in the church, even if personally he did not accept the creed, or if he lived in open transgression. The Hutterian Brethren and Swiss Brethren insisted that such must not only have the right to withdraw from the church, but must be excluded.<sup>21</sup>

The practice of baptism upon the confession of faith then was designed to mean, as has been intimated, among other things, the rejection of a union of church and state and of using force in religious matters. This was undoubtedly the main reason for the decree of the Diet (*Reichstag*) of Speyer, in 1529, through which rebaptism was made a capital crime and the execution of the Anabaptists without formal trial or sentence was made lawful.<sup>22</sup>

#### THE PRINCIPAL REASON FOR THE TOLERATION OF THE BRETHREN IN MORAVIA

Not a few of the Moravian nobles showed some appreciation for the position of the Brethren regarding the volun-

- 
21. It has been supposed by a number of writers that the principle of toleration, as defended by the Hutterites and Mennonites meant that any religious opinion, or creed, should be tolerated within the Brotherhood. This is obviously erroneous. They defended a well defined body of doctrine whose acceptance was a condition of membership in their organization. A number of persons were expelled by them on account of differing from the Brotherhood in doctrines and principles.
  22. The official text in full of the Edict of the Diet of Speyer of 1529 against the Anabaptists may be found in *Aller des Heiligen Römischen Reichs gehaltene Reichstage, Abschiede und Satzungen*, Mainz, 1666, pp. 210, 211. Full text is to be found also in *Anabaptisticum et Enthusiasticum Pantheon und Geistliches Rüst-Haus*, etc., 1702, pp. 6-8; likewise edited by Ludwig Keller in *Monatshefte der Comenius-Gesellschaft*, vol. 9, Berlin, pp. 55-57. It will be recalled that the revolutionary Anabaptists of Münster arose at a later date, namely in 1533.

tary principle in religion. One of the lords at one time wrote to the higher authorities in Vienna that their ancestors already had realized that it was impossible to force a religious faith on any one, "for faith is a gift of God and cannot be given by any one except God himself." Yet, the chief reason for the tolerant attitude of the lords toward the Brethren is found in the fact that they had great material gain from the Hutterian communities.

From a later period, namely the first decade of the seventeenth century, there is a valuable testimony concerning the general attitude of the Moravian nobles toward the Brethren. At that time the principle of a strict union between church and state was not maintained in Moravia, partly for the reason that Moravia was not formally incorporated in the Empire. The testimony in question is found in a book on the Hutterites written in 1607 by one of their bitterest opponents, Dr. Christoph Andreas Fischer, priest at Feldsberg in Lower Austria (near the Moravian border). He wrote:

What is the reason that the Moravian lords protect the Anabaptists and give them employment? Why do they permit them the exercise of their religion in their territory, yea, what is more, on their own estates? Verily, it is well known that they on the whole do not grant the same liberties to the Christians [Catholics] as to the Anabaptists. If the lords are Catholics, they will tolerate neither Lutherans nor Calvinists in their territory. If they are Lutherans or Calvinists, they will by no means tolerate the Catholics. And yet they [both Catholic and Protestant lords] tolerate the Anabaptists who are the very refuse of all heresy, yea, who are excluded from toleration in the whole German empire and are everywhere put to death by fire and sword.<sup>23</sup>

---

23. Fischer, Christoph Andreas, *Vier und funfftzig Erhebliche Ursachen Warumb die Widertaufer nicht sein im Land zu leyden*. (Fifty-four



The Moravian nobles found it eminently to their own interest to tolerate and protect the Brethren. The economic benefits derived from the Hutterite settlements were very great. In reply to the oft-repeated demands of the royal government in Vienna for the suppression of this sect, the nobles insisted that these people were of the most law-abiding and useful subjects and that their expulsion would be a great loss to the country. Such demands from Vienna were from time to time repeated but, on the whole, without success.<sup>24</sup>

### THE FIRST GREAT PERSECUTION IN MORAVIA

In consequence of the revolt and excesses of the Anabaptists of Münster (1534-35), King Ferdinand of Austria demanded the expulsion of the Hutterian Brethren with such persistence that the Moravian nobles did not dare to refuse his orders. They finally acquiesced in their persecution.

The Hutterian Brethren of course had nothing to do with the Anabaptists of Münster.<sup>25</sup> They differed from them

---

Important Reasons why the Anabaptists Should Not be Tolerated in the Land). Ingolstadt (Bavaria) 1607, p. 106. Another book of the same author has the title, *Der Hutterischen Widertaufer Taubenkobel In Welchem all ihr Wust, Mist, Kott und Unflatt, das ist ihr falsche, stinckende unflätige und abscheuliche Lehren werden erzählet*. Ingolstadt, 1607. Both books are in the Mennonite Historical Library at Scottdale, Pa. Cf. Loserth, Art. Fischer, C. A., in *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, I.

24. "One can grasp," says Dr. Johann Loserth, "that the Moravian nobility, when it came to the expulsion of the Anabaptists, was only protecting its own interests when it emphatically intervened on their behalf." The members of the Brotherhood who were in the service of the lords, "recommended themselves by their unconditional faithfulness and conscientiousness." Professor Loesche of Vienna says, "The nobility of the land saw their houses and lands, fields and meadows, their whole business well cared for by Anabaptist managers, and were absolutely sure that they would not be imposed upon, or defrauded, by them. In their own interests they energetically opposed the expulsion of the Brethren." From *Theologischer Jahresbericht*, herausgegeben von Krüger und Schian, Leipzig, 1895, p. 296, a book review.
25. All parties and sects of the Reformation period which disapproved of the practice of infant baptism were called Anabaptists. By the governments and leading theologians they were all considered as being of one party.

on the most important points of doctrine and practice. The Münsterites rejected altogether the principle of nonresistance and the separation of church and state. They constituted a politico-revolutionary party. In the city of Münster, the capital of Westphalia in Northwestern Germany, they, through force of arms, founded a new state with which their church was closely united. They practised adult baptism but not faith baptism, for those who declined to unite with their church were persecuted and exiled. They introduced polygamy and other practices which were an abomination to the Hutterites. The contemporary chroniclers of the Hutterian Brethren speak of the Münsterite church only in terms of severest condemnation and denunciation.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless the Brethren were unjustly decried by their opponents as being of the same sect, or party, as the Anabaptists of Münster.

In the year 1535 there began, in consequence, a great persecution of the Brethren in Moravia. As above stated, their friends among the nobility seemed at this time to be unable to disregard the strict orders of the king. The Brethren were driven from their dwellings. They saw themselves compelled to encamp "on the wide heath under the open sky." Eventually they were forced to hide in forests and cliffs. On Easter, 1536, they held the Lord's supper in a fir forest. The elders and leading brethren finally decided upon the division of the congregations into groups of six to eight persons to seek employment and shelter. In this they grad-

---

26. In a *Confession* presented to the Moravian nobility in the year 1545 the Brethren wrote: "Notwithstanding all this, many accuse us of being like the Münsterites and belonging to the same party with them. Nevertheless all men who have become acquainted with us know that no one has less similarity with them than we who to the highest degree hate their teaching and life, and testify that it is a work whose author is the devil." (Beck, J., *Die Geschichts-Bücher der Wiedertäufer in Oesterreich-Ungarn.....in der Zeit von 1526 bis 1785*, Wien 1883, p. 170). The chroniclers of the Brethren refer to the leaders of the Münsterite Anabaptists as "wholly corrupt, wicked men" and to their sect as "an abominable offence instituted by the devil." (*Geschicht-Buch*, p. 108. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 407). The last named work is generally known among the Hutterites as the *Larger Church Chronicle*.

ually succeeded, since their faithful services, not only as common laborers but also in more responsible positions, were highly appreciated by the Moravian lords. The nobles finally permitted them again to settle on their lands. In this persecution the Brethren lost all their possessions but within a decade they found it possible to establish many communities.

### THE SECOND PERSECUTION IN MORAVIA

The Brotherhood in Moravia after the persecution just referred to, had a period of peace and rest until after the Smalkaldian War, in 1547. This war was a conflict between the Emperor and the Smalkaldian League consisting of Lutheran princes under the leadership of the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse. The Emperor, having gained a complete victory over the army of the league, decided to restore Romanism throughout his domains. A merciless persecution of the Brethren began, in consequence, in the year 1548. The Moravian nobles wrote to King Ferdinand that the demanded expulsion of the Brethren would deprive the land of its best workers but they were nevertheless forced to obey the orders of the king.

At the beginning of this persecution the Brethren had in Moravia twenty-six colonies (Bruderhofs). The whole brotherhood was driven from Moravia. For a short time they found refuge in Hungary, particularly on the estates of Baron Niary Franz von Präntsch in Sabatisch (Szobotiste), near Senica (modern Czechoslovakia). This nobleman had large estates in Moravia also, and had thus become acquainted with the Brethren. Two years before the beginning of this persecution he had permitted them to locate and organize a Bruderhof at Sabatisch. Other Hungarian lords also offered them shelter and protection. Within a short time the Brethren established in Hungary twelve congregations. Soon however, persecution overtook them here also. After disregarding for a time the orders of King Ferdinand, the Hungarian lords finally yielded to his stern demands and ban-

ished them in the autumn of 1548. They were forced to depart even from Sabatisch, yet Franz von Präntsch had some of his guards accompany them to the Moravian border in order to protect them from the robbers who inflicted great suffering upon the refugees from other places. Many of them sought shelter in a forest. Here they sojourned about five weeks and were then driven back to Hungary by Moravian magistrates. For want of space the history of this very severe persecution cannot be given here. Much of the time the Brethren were compelled to live in cliffs and caverns. The magistrates gave them no protection and the Brethren never resorted to force to protect themselves. They suffered much from robbers who in not a few instances even stripped some of them of their clothes. The chronicler of the Brethren relates that, although during this severe tribulation there were many who forsook the Brotherhood, there were also many "who united with the Church, became pious, amended their lives and took upon themselves the cross, indeed there were more of these than often afterward in times of quiet." This persecution continued for over four years. Some of the men found employment and through their earnings the most urgent necessities could be procured for the Brotherhood. Finally they were again permitted to form settlements in various places in Moravia.

#### MORAVIA THE LAND OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM — AN IDEAL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

In no other country did the various Anabaptist sects enjoy such freedom as in Moravia. Thither they fled from all parts of Switzerland and Germany. Many were apprehended while en route to Moravia and executed. In Moravia most of the refugees united with the Hutterian Brethren. Johannes Kessler, a chronicler of the Swiss Reformed Church, wrote about the year 1540: "From Switzerland and other countries many Anabaptists go to Moravia, since they have scarcely any abode or security elsewhere. Some of them



in that country lead a very strict life which would be worthy of recognition and praise, if their doctrine were otherwise pure and sound."<sup>27</sup> The chronicles of the Hutterites in Moravia show that the families constituting their congregations had come from various parts of Germany and Switzerland mostly from Württemberg. The native stock of Moravia was not Germanic but Slavonic.

After the persecution just mentioned, there began, in the year 1553, a period to which the chroniclers of the Brethren refer as "the favorable time for the Church." This was followed by "the ideal period," 1563 to 1592, during which there was little open persecution in Moravia. In this period the Brotherhood had in Moravia and a few points in Hungary between forty and fifty communities, (Bruderhofs), numbering 12,000 to 15,000 souls.

---

27. Johannes Kesslers *Sabbata*, herausgegeben von Egli und Schoch, St. Gallen, 1902, p. 340.

## CHAPTER II

### LIFE, ACTIVITIES AND SUFFERINGS OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN MORAVIA

Of the Hutterian congregations in Moravia it can be said that they were centers of true spiritual life and activity, of genuine Christian piety and devotion. It is not probable that at any time since the apostolic period the Christian ideal of brotherly love and entire consecration to the service of God was anywhere so fully realized as among the Moravian "Anabaptists". The vigorous spiritual life which flourished among them is evidenced abundantly by their numerous writings of that period. The Lutheran church historian, Professor J. H. Kurtz characterized the religious life of the Hutterian Brotherhood of this period in Moravia as follows:

They are noted for their sincere piety, exemplary discipline, moral fervor, strict industry, conscientious fair dealing, unexampled patience in suffering, but above all for their wonderful martyr-courage and martyr-joy.<sup>28</sup>

#### THE LIFE OF THE HUTTERIAN BRETHREN IN MORAVIA

The *Larger Church Chronicle* of the Hutterian Brethren has the following clear description of the life of the Brotherhood in Moravia.<sup>29</sup>

---

28. Kurtz, J. H., *Lehrbuch der Kirchengeschichte für Studierende*, Neunte Auflage, Band 2, Leipzig, 1885, p. 156. This testimony is the more noteworthy as Professor Kurtz had a decidedly unfavorable opinion of all parties and sects which dissented from both Romanism and state church Protestantism. He shared the view of the earlier Protestant theologians who considered all such as fanatics ranking even beneath Romanism. Dr. Kurtz, in the work from which this citation is taken, treats all parties and sects called Anabaptists under the general heading, "The Deformation of the Church."

29. *Geschicht-Buch*, pp: 332-337.

So they dwelt in the land which God had evidently foreordained and appointed for them. They gathered for worship in peace and unity and taught and preached the Gospel and the Word of God openly. Twice each week and sometimes oftener they held public religious meetings.

Christian excommunication was used against those who fell into grievous sin; they were put out and avoided. Each transgressor was disciplined according to his guilt. Those who gave evidence of true repentance were reinstated.

Christian community of goods was practised according to the teaching of Christ and his practice with the disciples, as well as the usage of the apostolic church. All shared alike in one common treasury, one common house, and one common table, there being, of course, special provisions for the sick and for the children.

Swords were forged into pruning hooks, saws, and other useful implements. Never were there any weapons of defence or war, such as swords, muskets, spears, etc. found among them. Every one was his fellowman's brother and all lived together in harmony as a peaceful people who did not give any assistance to the bloody business of war, whether with taxes or as much as lifting a hand.<sup>30</sup> Revenge was forever done away. Patience was their only weapon in all difficulties.

They were subject to the authorities and obedient in all good works, in all things that are not contrary to God, the faith, and conscience. What was due the government in the form of taxes or customs was paid; service was rendered and honor was given where honor was due, since the government is ordained by God and is an institution as necessary in this evil world as the daily bread.

---

30. The chronicles tell of many instances in which horses and cattle were taken from the Brethren by the authorities to be sold and the proceeds to be used for the payment of war taxes. This procedure had the approval of the Moravian diet. (Compare Fischer, *Vier und fünfzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 57).

No cursing nor swearing was heard, without which the world cannot speak. No oath was made; there was no betting, no dancing and card-playing, no carousing nor drinking. They did not make for themselves fashionable, immodest, proud and unsuitable clothes. All such things were done away. There was no singing of shameful songs of which the world is full, but Christian and spiritual songs, and songs of Bible stories.<sup>31</sup>

The places of leadership were occupied by elders, men who taught the Word of God and who with admonitions to practice its teachings engaged in the ministry of reconciliation, giving attention to reading, teaching, and admonition. Difficulties which occurred were settled by them as arbitrators.

Other talented men were in charge of the management of temporal affairs, supervised finances, provided for supplies, and did the buying and selling.

Still others were in charge of the management to arrange the work which each man was to do, so that each did what he was best able, whether in the field or elsewhere.

Others were in charge of the table service. The people came with prayer and thanksgiving to eat, and returned again with thanksgiving to work. With prayer and thanksgiving they went to bed and with the same began each new day, each at his work.

The schoolmasters, together with sisters ordained for the care and instruction of young children, had charge of educational affairs and the discipline of the children.

---

31. A great number of religious hymns were composed in the Hutterian Brotherhood. Singing had evidently a large place in the life of their communities. The book, *Die Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder*, Scottdale, 1914, contains nearly all their extant hymns printed from old manuscripts. The subtitle of this work, *Gesangbuch*, is misleading, as the book is not used in worship. Many of the hymns of the Hutterites were lost through the systematic destruction of their writings during the last great persecution in the eighteenth century.



There was no usury nor taking of interest, no buying and selling for gain. There was only that which had been obtained through honest labor, through daily work of various description, including all kinds of agricultural and horticultural work.

There were quite a few carpenters and masons who built many substantial dwellings and other buildings for the landlords, noblemen, citizenry and others, especially in Moravia but also in Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. An experienced head mason was entrusted with the oversight of all building operations and made the required agreements and contracts.

Numerous mills were rented from the owners at their request and operated by brethren as millers. An experienced brother was charged with the oversight of this work and with making contracts with the landlords with the consent of the elders. Besides, many brethren were engaged as head millers by those who did not desire to rent their mills.

Many landlords and noblemen rented their farms to the brethren while others engaged brethren as head farmers and head gardeners. This work also was in charge of a foreman who took no steps without the counsel of the elders.

In short, no one was idle; each did what was required of him and what he was able to do, whether he had been poor or rich, noble or commoner, before. Even the priests who joined the Church learned to labor and work.

Then there were all sorts of honorable and useful trades such as mason, blacksmith, coppersmith, scythe-smith, cooper, watchmaker, cutler, binder, polisher, tanner, furrier, shoemaker, saddler, harnessmaker, bagmaker, wagoner, ropemaker, joiner, turner, hatter, clothmaker, tailor, basket-maker, sieve-maker, glass-maker, potter, surgeon, physician. In each craft there was a supervisor who

had charge of the shop, planned the work, and did the buying and selling as a representative of the church.

Every one, even if absent from the community, worked for the common good so that the needs of all could be supplied. It was a perfect body, where each member served and was served by every other member.

Just as in a clock each wheel drives another and each part is necessary to move another, so that it serves its purpose; or as in a colony of bees in the common hive one part prepares the honey, another the wax, another furnishes water, and another does something else so that the precious sweet honey may finally be produced, and that in an amount not just sufficient for their own needs but enough that man may also be supplied; so was it among them. It is by thorough organization alone that a good work may be established and maintained, especially in the House of God who himself is a God of order and a Master-Workman. When order and discipline disappear, ruin is inevitable.

### "A CITY SET UPON A HILL"

It is to be noted also that the Church became widely known through various ways and means. In the first place, people learned about the Church through those who were imprisoned for the sake of their testimony to Christ and his truth, both ministers and other brethren, from whom men sought and learned the basis of their faith. This occurred in many places of the Germanic countries, since the brethren were arrested everywhere, and often lay in prison for long periods; and thus they testified in word and deed, in life and by death, that their faith was the truth.

Again, the Church, her religion, teaching, faith, and life, became known to kings, emperors, princes, and lords. Rulers and those attached to their courts came to visit the communities of the Brethren and thus became acquainted

with their life and teaching, and in this and other ways found that the evil reports about them were untrue. Many praised them as a pious people and recognized the Church as an institution which must be of God, since so many people lived together in such harmony.

Nevertheless the world hated and envied the Church, so that she might well have said with David, "We have as many enemies as the hair of our head." As soon as they stepped outside the door they were slandered and abused as Anabaptists, Bi-Baptists, New-Baptists, schismatics, rioters, and all kinds of other terrible folk. People everywhere despised and mocked them and believed grisly lies about them, such as that they ate children, and other gruesome things which would have been a grief to them had they dreamed of them, much less done them. Yea, many slanderous charges were conjured up to bring the Church into suspicion and disrepute. But these things befell them only for the sake of the name of Christ and his truth, because they strove to follow him, and for no other reason.

If a person traveled about with only a staff in his hand, as a sign that he did not want to do any one any harm, or if he but prayed before eating, he was called an Anabaptist and a heretic; so coarse is the devil. But as soon as one left the Church and turned away from it, walked about in heathenish fashion with a sword at his belt or a musket on his shoulder, from that moment on he was welcome to the world and again a good Christian in their eyes. Again, if one went about without evidences of haughtiness in his clothes<sup>32</sup> and said that gambling, pride,

---

32. A recent writer says of the present-day Hutterian Brethren: "The Hutterian Church regulates many of the minutest details of life, as, for example, all matters of dress. Clothing is nearly uniform, and always very plain, very modest, and very serviceable. The men wear dark gray suits with loose trousers and sack coats. Their hats are round and black. The women wear dark figured dresses with long, full skirts,

haughtiness, carousing and gluttony are sin, evil, and against God, and conducted himself with meekness and patience, as becomes a disciple of Christ, he was reckoned by the world as a heretic, schismatic, deceiver, and a fool, and what not else besides. But when he forsook that life, went out into the worldly life again, stepped into the inn and began to sing drinking and filthy songs, stuck a silly plume in his hat as a fool's sign, hung around the dancing place, wore a big collar or crazy clothes, and made the air blue with his oaths and curses, from that moment he was welcome to the world and worthy of all love and friendship, for then the world recognized that he was one of her own again; she was satisfied with him and praised him saying: "Yea, you have done well to leave the Brethren and be converted and become a good Christian. Now you have the true faith. It was good of you to forsake this heretical sect."

But the Lord greatly strengthens and encourages us by withholding peace of mind and heart from many of those who have forsaken the truth and turned again to the world. Whether they stand or lie down, no matter what they do, day in and day out, their conscience is accusing them of their apostasy. Yea, there are many who return, repent with much sorrow and weeping, confess their sins, and seek peace with God and his church, ready to give their lives rather than forsake the truth again.<sup>33</sup>

---

plain waists that have long sleeves and come up to the neck. Their headdress is a dark kerchief with white polka dots, folded diagonally. With them dress is not a matter of personal taste, but a matter of religion; and their dress is the great mark of their religious order." (Clark, Bertha W., *The Hutterian Communities*, in the *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. XXXII, No. 4, August, 1924).

33. A striking testimony to the point is found in a book published in 1587 by Christoph Erhard, a noted Roman Catholic theologian, who, beside Christoph Andreas Fischer, was the chief literary opponent of the Hutterian Brethren. "It is rare, indeed," he says, "that one who leaves the Hutterites and again unites with the Catholic Church, remains stead-



We have great reassurance when we have heard and learned with terror and pain of heart of the despair of the apostates who had once known and accepted the truth of God, but have forsaken it; when God convicted them in sickness or in the face of death, how they have then so pitifully expressed their regret and experienced a useless late remorse. Many have desired and prayed with great fear that God would permit them to come back, that they might repent and return to what they had forsaken. And many have succeeded in doing so.

### A MISSIONARY CHURCH

In 1563 a missionary hymn was composed in the Hutterite Brotherhood. According to the wording of the title of this hymn it was intended to be used at the departure of the brethren who were leaving the community as messengers of the gospel. It is probably the oldest missionary hymn. This hymn contains 23 verses of 8 lines and treats of the importance of spreading the gospel and of the dangers which ac-

---

fast in the true faith." He gives examples of members of the Hutterian Brotherhood who embraced the Roman Catholic faith, only to "relapse" and again join the Hutterites. "No true Catholic Christian in Moravia," he says further, "believes that any conversions of Hutterites to the Catholic faith are lasting or genuine." ("Dass ihnen, den abgefallenen Hutterischen Brüdern, kein wahrer katholischer Christ in Mähren nit mehr trauen und auff ihre Bekehrung etwas halten will). From *Zwelff wichtige und starke Ursachen Hansen Jedelshausers von Ulm, Warumb er von den Widertaufern, so man Hutterische Brüder nennt, sei abgetreten, dieselben verlassen, sich aber zu der Catholischen Römischen Kirche bekehrt habe*. Ingolstadt, 1587, sig. A 2v. (In the Mennonite Historical Library, Scottdale, Pa.) Cf. Loserth, Art. Erhard in *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, vol. I. The commander of the castle Hohenwittlingen near Urach in Württemberg in which Paul Glock was imprisoned for upward of fifteen years, said publicly, in 1573, that he had never heard of a Hutterite in Württemberg who renounced his faith. (*Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer*, vol. I, *Württemberg*, by G. Bossert, Leipzig, 1930, p. 370). "It sometimes happens," says Christoph Andreas Fischer, "that a few Jews are converted to the Christian faith, but of the Anabaptists there is not one among a thousand that will be converted." (*Vier und funfftzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 119).

companied this work at that time.<sup>34</sup> The *Larger Church Chronicle*, about 1542, speaks of the labors of the missionaries in the following words:

The witnesses to the truth and messengers of God gave testimony earnestly and steadfastly to the Word of the Lord by their life and work, by word and deed. They spoke with power of the kingdom of God showing how all men must repent, be converted, and turn from the vanity of this world and its unrighteousness, from a sinful, vile and wanton life to God, their Creator, and Jesus Christ, their Savior and Redeemer. To all such work God gave his blessing and grace, so that it was carried on with joy.

However, this was at no time accomplished without great tribulation and suffering, but only at the price of much blood which was shed in many countries, cities and villages, for the sake of the faith and of the testimony of Jesus Christ. Many hundred brethren and sisters in Christ gave their lives for the faith.<sup>35</sup>

---

34. *Die Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder*, pp. 650-652. Following are stanzas of this hymn.

## 2.

Von Gott ist uns gesendet  
Das Heil durch Jesum Christ,  
Sein Rat durch ihn vollendet,  
Auf Erden kommen ist;  
Erlöst das menschlich G'schlecht,  
Die annehmen sein Bericht  
Und folgen seiner Lehre  
Wird er verlassen nicht.

## 3.

Wie Christus ward gesendet  
Von Gott, dem Vater sein,  
Also hat er's bekennet  
**Dass er sein Juenger g'mein**  
Hat gesendet und befohlen  
Das Evangelium  
Den Völkern zu verkünden,  
Dass sie's erkennen thun.

## 7.

O Gott, so thu uns stärken,  
Dass wir es mögen thun,  
Allzeit treulich aufmerken  
Zu suchen dein Ehr und Ruhm,  
Und den Menschen zeigen an  
Von Sünden abzustahn,  
Dass sie die Buss thun wirken,  
Wird sonst gar übel gahn.

## 12.

Wir wollen's ein wenig erzählen  
Anstatt der Brüder wert,  
Die hin und wieder ziehen  
**Im Elend hie auf Erd,**  
Darzu fürgesehen sein  
Von Gott uns seiner Gemein,  
Zu tragen edlen Samen,  
Die Frucht zu sammeln ein.

35. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 181.

Again the same chronicler says:

They carried on Christian mission work according to the command of the Lord. "As my Father has sent me, so send I you." Likewise: "I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bear fruit." Accordingly they sent out into the countries, yearly, ministers of the Gospel and their assistants to seek out those who desired to amend their lives and were zealous for the truth. Such were brought to Moravia by day and by night, in spite of hangman and executioner, and notwithstanding the fact that many had to give their lives and did not reach the Brotherhood in Moravia.<sup>36</sup>

Claus Felbinger, a Hutterite evangelist of Moravia, wrote in 1560:

Some have asked us why we came into the country of the duke of Bavaria to dissuade the people from him. I answered: We go not only into this land, but into all lands, as far as our language extends. For wherever God opens a door unto us, shows us zealous hearts who diligently seek after Him, have a dislike of the ungodly life of the world and desire to do right, to all such places we aim to go and for this we have scriptural ground.

#### TESTIMONY OF FISCHER AND OTHERS CONCERNING THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE BRETHREN

The polemical writings of Christoph Andreas Fischer against the Brethren contain many coarse slanders and calumnies and are therefore to be used with caution; nevertheless they are valuable sources of information concerning the Hutterite Brotherhood in the sixteenth century. They contain, for example, important testimony regarding the unlim-

---

36. *Ibid.*, p. 333. Applicants for baptism and church membership were instructed in their duty of a willingness to be used in the provinces in mission work ("sich in den landten gebrauchen zu lassen"). Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 648.

ited confidence many Moravian lords had in the Brethren. Their ability and conscientiousness had been abundantly tested. The lords committed to them the most important positions of trust. Christoph Andreas Fischer, in his book *Fifty-four Important Reasons Why the Anabaptists Should not be Tolerated in the Land*, writes:

Anabaptists who come to the lords in Moravia are preferred before others. The lords do not desire to read or even to see the certificates of their previous training [being satisfied to know that the elders of the church considered them qualified to fill the position in question]. They do not require of them recommendations or certificates of previous services. The lords are satisfied just to know that they are Anabaptists, and from then on they have the first place at the table and are entrusted with lands and people. Is this not blindness? Never do they promote Christians without definite knowledge concerning them, and yet such favors do they show the Anabaptists.<sup>37</sup>

The Anabaptists have the greatest favor among the nobility. They have the preference as managers of estates, be it dairy or wheat farms, mills, tile yards, gardens, or anything else. They are appointed by them to high positions in the castles, such as manager, steward, and keeper.<sup>38</sup>

The lords must pay the Anabaptists larger salaries and wages than the Christians who have formerly held the same positions. This can be proved by the account books of some of the lords.<sup>39</sup> The lords give the Anabaptists such great freedom that in certain offices they do not even require an account from them.<sup>40</sup>

It is displeasing to God that the lords tolerate them and entrust their estates to them. It is contrary to Chris-

---

37. *Vier und fünfzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 84.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 114.



tian love. For if a Jew helps another Jew and heathen favor each other, why should not Christians also help each other? To this some one may reply, "It is true, it would be more just, but the Christians are not so faithful and reliable as the Anabaptists; therefore it is right that the lords employ the latter."<sup>41</sup>

A chronicler of the Brethren writes:

Some of the lords preferred them above any one else for service and labor. For this reason there were too few of them in the land for the lords. On account of their faithfulness their services were in general demand, while on account of their religion their number was, in the opinion of many, too large. Some of the lords were unfavorably disposed toward them and, for their faith's sake, did not want to tolerate them in the land. Others were angry with them when they could not get as many as they desired for their service, and were, as was often the case, compelled to wait for years before their wishes could be granted.

Nevertheless, it was at last realized that service in prominent positions for the lords did not prove a blessing to the Brotherhood, since for some of them the temptation to give up the strictly simple life of the Brotherhood was too great.<sup>42</sup>

Fischer says further in the above mentioned book:

These hypocritical Anabaptists live outwardly such an apparently good life that even a Christian would swear that they were the most patient and peaceful people, and caused no trouble in the least to anyone.<sup>43</sup> [And yet they are for this writer "the most godless and accursed sect."]

They glory in their supposed martyrs who because

---

41. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

42. *Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder*, p. 335.

43. *Vier und fünfzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 76.

of their stubbornness were burned, decapitated, drowned, or executed in other ways. Is it not true that all Moravia, since it has taken in this vermin, has never been punished so as now and that it can no longer expect any fortune, any blessing?<sup>44</sup>

Of the Jews occasionally some are converted to the Christian faith, but among thousands of Anabaptists not one is ever converted, for which reason the Jews are rather to be tolerated, while the Anabaptists are to be looked upon as the most desperate enemies of Christendom and as worse than the Turks, and therefore to be totally exterminated.<sup>45</sup>

In his book *Of the Cursed Beginnings of the Anabaptists* Fischer wrote:

Among all the heresies and sects which have their origin from Luther, to the destruction of the Catholic Church, not a one has a better appearance and greater external holiness than the Anabaptists. Other sects are for the most part riotous, blood-thirsty and given over to carnal lusts; not so the Anabaptists. They call each other brothers and sisters; they use no profanity nor unkind language; they use no weapons of defence. They are temperate in eating and drinking; they use no vain display of clothes. They own nothing in private but have everything in common. They do not go to law before judicial courts but bear everything patiently, as they say, in the Holy Spirit. Who should suppose that under this sheep's clothing only ravening wolves are hidden?<sup>46</sup>

---

44. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

46. Fischer, C. A., *Von der Wiedertäufer Verfluchtem Ursprung, Gottlosen Lehre, und derselben Gründliche Widerlegung*, Bruck a. d. Teya, 1603, sig. A2v. This book is very rare. The writer has used the copy in the British Museum in London. A copy was recently secured by the Mennonite Historical Library at Scottdale, Pa. A reply to this work was written by Claus Braidl, the head pastor of the Hutterian Brotherhood un-

A more recent writer on the history of the Hutterites, Dr. Joseph Beck, scorning the idea that their piety was only hypocrisy, said:

To die to the world, to manifest humility, meekness and patience in all conditions of life, to hold death for the truth as gain, poverty as riches and diligently to strive to live a blameless life was to them a sacred duty.<sup>47</sup>

### THE SCHOOLS OF THE BRETHREN

The Hutterian Brethren in Moravia had a remarkable school organization. The first congregation established its own school soon after its organization.<sup>48</sup> From the beginning school attendance was compulsory. The Hutterian schools had a good reputation and at times were attended by non-Hutterites. Special schools were provided for those who were past school age when they united with the Brotherhood. At a time when general education in Europe was in a pitiable condition the number of illiterates among the Hutterites was small. In Moravia the congregations were located in the midst of a people the great majority of whom had never attended a school.

In a Hutterian Bruderhof there were usually two schools, the so-called small school and the large school. The first was a sort of kindergarten for children from two to six

---

der the title, *Ein Widerlegung und warhafft Verantwortung der allergausamisten Gotteslesterung, Schmach und unwarhafftigen Beschuldigungen, so Christoph Andreas Fischer, Pfarrer zu Feldsperg über uns Brüder erdacht*. Fischer, in turn, replied to this booklet in his *Antwort auff die Widerlegung, so Claus Breutel, der Wiedertaufer König und Oberste, sambt seinen Spiessgesellen hat getan*, a copy of which is in the library of the Mennonite church in Amsterdam. Cf. Hege, Art. Braidl, in *Mennonitischen Lexikon*, I.

47. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 14.

48. One of the first teachers of the Brethren was the former priest Jeronymus Kaels who suffered martyrdom in 1536 in Vienna. He is mentioned in the chronicles as a teacher as early as 1533. A touching letter of farewell to his wife, written shortly before his execution, is found in *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 121.

years of age. Here the children were kept throughout the day under the care and supervision of a "school mother." At the age of six the children were put into the large school which was under the control of a male teacher. The writer of the Hutterian Confession (*Rechenschaft*) has the following to say about these schools:

Sisters who have been found qualified are appointed for the small schools by the church. It is their duty to care for the children, and as soon as they can talk, to lay the word of the testimony of God into their mouths. They teach them to pray and to understand whatever is within the child's grasp. In this school the children are kept until they are able to learn to read and write, at about five or six years. At this age they are given over to the school master who teaches them, and in addition, leads them on in the knowledge of God so they learn to know and do the will of God. . . . So we teach our children from little up to seek not the temporal but the eternal things.<sup>49</sup>

In 1568 the head pastor Peter Walpot gave an address to the assembled schoolmasters of the Brotherhood at Niemschitz near Auspitz. This address was written down and preserved. A treatise on pedagogy, called *Schulordnung*, from the year 1578, also exists. Extracts from both these writings are here given.<sup>50</sup>

Dear brethren, we thought it good to call you together to speak to you concerning the work which is assigned to you in the schools, in order that you may be the more diligent in your care of the children which are committed unto us and you by the Lord, that they may be brought up in the Lord and receive only the best training from youth up.

---

49. *Rechenschaft unserer Religion, Lehre und Glaubens*. Reprint, Berne, Indiana, 1902, p. 130.

50. Printed in *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für deutsche Erziehungs- und Schulgeschichte*, vol. XI, Heft. 2. Berlin, 1901.



The schoolmasters are entrusted with the children by the Lord and the Brotherhood; therefore they should teach them to honor and fear God, and do the very best for them.

Great care and discrimination is necessary in the training of children. Often a child can be trained and taught with kind words while severity would be all in vain. Another may be won with rewards, while strictness may be necessary to teach and train the third. Therefore the training of the children should be done in the fear of the Lord.

The little ones who have just come to school for the first time need sympathy. Their will should not be broken all at once because of the bad effects which might follow.

One should be careful to teach the children to refrain from things which lead to penalties, and this is not accomplished by threats of severe punishment.

The schoolmasters and schoolmistresses shall see to it that the children do not hear quarreling, disunity and loud talking. They shall inspire them to gentleness and self-control by means of the example of a peaceful, friendly, long-suffering, well disciplined life and quiet demeanor, avoiding all unbecoming, unnecessary talk so that the children will have no occasion for talking about the teachers.

Neither a brother nor a sister shall be permitted in discipline of either small or large children to be harsh, rude, rash, or angry, or to use blows to injury, or to strike the child on the head or mouth.

Sisters who are in charge of the kindergarten shall take care that the old nature does not get the upper hand with them.<sup>51</sup> They shall not be too severe inasmuch as we see that the Lord also does not always deal with us according to our deserts but according to grace.

---

51. This is one of the many proofs found in their writings that the Brethren did not claim sinless perfection for themselves.

When children are brought to school, they shall be carefully examined. If there is evidence of some contagious disease, they shall be segregated at once in sleeping, drinking, and especially in washing.

The schoolmasters shall also take care, when they have been examining the bad mouths and have put their fingers into bad mouths, never to put the unwashed finger into another's healthy mouth and thereby contaminate it, but always wash the finger with a clean cloth and water.

The sisters shall take especial care to keep the little children clean. They shall not carry the hot water into the rooms, so that none may be burnt. The bathing shall not be done with too hot water since that would be harmful.

The sister who watches at night shall take good care of the light and shall often make the rounds to see that the children are well covered.

None of the school sisters shall serve the Lord's needy ones with ill will, complaining, or impatience, for in such service there would be no blessing, and the children would be bound to suffer from ill temper and from unreasonable disciplinary measures. For where there is ill will, unwise words are bound to come, such as, "You naughty children, you are a continuous bother," and similar fits of temper which must grieve any one who would witness it, and must be displeasing to the Lord who sees all and who in his own time will call such conduct to judgment. Therefore each one should maintain an attitude of cheerfulness and good will and in so doing win the approval of the Lord.

In short, let each one of the school sisters so conduct herself with the children at all times as though they were her own, whether in giving food and drink, in lifting up and setting down, in carrying and leading about, yea, in wiping and washing according to need, so that each one will be able to answer before God and may have a good

conscience in all blamelessness before both the Brotherhood and those that are without.

There is no record of any institution of secondary education existing in the Hutterian communities, yet it is not impossible that there was among them some such institution for the training of teachers. A number of persons of not inconsiderable educational attainments, such as government officials and priests, united with them. Christoph Andreas Fischer says, they disregarded all higher schools and all learned men.<sup>52</sup> Their interests were overwhelmingly religious, and in religious matters the leading scholars were, in their opinion, unenlightened. For not only did "the consensus of scholarship" in that period mean the rejection of the truth which the Brethren had accepted from heart conviction and in which they found the greatest satisfaction and joy, but the crowning proof that the scholars were groping in Egyptian darkness was found in the fact that they were practically a unit in defending the view that such people as the Brethren should be exterminated by fire and sword.

#### THE PHYSICIANS OF THE BRETHREN

The physicians of the Brethren were obviously among the most able and skilful. Their most famous physician was George Zobel who was repeatedly summoned to the imperial court at Prague and whose skill was put to the test by the Emperor personally. Says the chronicler of the Brethren:

In the year 1581 the Emperor summoned George Zobel of our Brotherhood to Prague. For a long time the Emperor had lain ill of a dangerous sickness and had not been able to make any improvement although he had been treated by many famous physicians from Italy, Spain, and other lands. He took the treatment advised by George Zobel, and by the help and blessing of God completely re-

---

52. *Vier und fünfzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 64.

covered. After our physician had been with him six months the emperor sent him home again with an honorable dismissal.<sup>53</sup>

In the year 1599 George Zobel was called into counsel by the imperial authorities in connection with an epidemic which was at that time raging in Bohemia.<sup>54</sup>

Christoph Andreas Fischer, on the contrary, had an unfavorable opinion of the Hutterite physicians. He had only scorn for them. He says:

Not only the common man, but even the lords, when they are in need of any sort of treatment, run to their physicians as though they were the ones who had gobbled up the whole art of medicine. How can the unskilled Anabaptists accomplish such things? There is more to dancing than wearing red slippers. They have already caused the death of many of my parishioners who put their lives into their hands.<sup>55</sup>

Concerning the nurses of the Brethren, Fischer says:

God have mercy, it has come to this that almost all noble ladies have to have only Anabaptist women for their midwives, wet-nurses and child-nurses, as though they alone were the most experienced in such things. The children will get from them nothing but poison and contempt for the Christian faith. No longer do I wonder that some of the lords do not comply with but actually oppose Catholic religious requirements. On the contrary, they protect the Anabaptists and have, in short, Anabaptist stomachs, for they have sucked these things from their nurses and have grown up under their influence.<sup>56</sup>

---

53. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 407.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 457.

55. *Vier und fünfzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, pp. 72-85.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 101.



## A CHURCH "UNDER THE CROSS"

The Hutterian Chronicle contains a "Martyrs' Gallery" of over 2173 brethren and sisters who gave their lives for the sake of the faith, making mention of the places of execution. In connection with this list the chronicler says:<sup>57</sup>

These all were executed with all sorts of torture and death, a new cloud of witnesses which surrounds us, a pillar of fire by night to go before us, confessors of the faith and Christian heroes of the truth of God, men and women, youths and maidens, old and young, teachers and hearers, by which we see that God has poured out his grace and power in these latter days as well as in the former time.

Some were tortured terribly on the rack, so that they were torn apart and died.

Some were burned to ashes and powder as heretics.

Some were roasted on beams.

Some were torn with red-hot irons.

Some were penned up in houses and all burned together.

Some were hung on trees.

Some were killed with the sword and their bodies chopped to pieces.<sup>58</sup>

Many had gags put into their mouths, and their tongues tied, so that they could not testify to their faith, and were thus led to the stake or scaffold.

What they confessed with their lips, they testified with their blood.

Often they were led to death in groups, like lambs to the slaughter, murdered. Thus the devil works who is a murderer from the beginning.

---

57. *Geschicht-Buch*, pp. 182-187.

58. The chronicler here adds the marginal note: "One need not go across the seas to find heathenism."

Many women were cast into the water and then taken out again and asked if they would recant and save their lives. Seeing that they were steadfast, the executioners cast them again into the water and drowned them. So terribly Satan raged through his children.

Others were starved to death in dark towers where they were deprived of the light of day.

Some were cast into deep, noisome dungeons where they lay among bats and vermin.

Many were tortured with hunger and only given insufficient bread and water before they were executed. Many who were adjudged too young to be slain, were bound and beaten miserably with rods, as happened to brother Hans Mändel when he was arrested at Sterzing as a boy. The same happened to Aendel Tuchmacher in the Tyrol as a lass of 16 years.

In spite of all they remained faithful with joyfulness. Nothing could move them from their faith or from the love of Christ Jesus our Lord. In them was the word of Christ truly fulfilled when he said: "Ye must be hated by all men." Likewise: "They will put you out of the synagogue, yea, the time will come when those who slay you will think that they do God a service thereby."

Many were promised great gifts and riches should they recant. Others were asked to utter only one expression of swearing and they would be released, yea only a slight profanity.<sup>59</sup> This was proposed to Brother Christian in the

---

59. *Ein kleines Flüchl*. (*Geschicht-Buch*, p. 185). It is a fact established from various sources that wilfully committing sin was considered a proof of being free from the "Anabaptist heresy." In both Swiss and Hutterian Brethren literature, as well as in Menno Simons' writings, it is stated that those who seriously purposed to live a consistent Christian life were in danger of being suspected to be Anabaptists. And such statements were not confined to the literature of the so-called Anabaptists themselves. Caspar Schwenckfeld wrote: "Those who begin an earnest Christian life, and live piously, are generally considered and asserted to be Anabaptists." (Schwenckfeld's *Epistolar*, vol. II, 1570, p. 307). And again: "I am being maligned, by both preachers and

Mermesser district in Bavaria, but he would rather suffer bitter death, and was thereupon executed.

Many were talked to in wonderful ways, often day and night argued with, with great cunning and cleverness, with many sweet and smooth words, by monks and priests, by doctors of theology, with much false witness and testimony, with threats and insults and mockery, yea with lies and grievous slanders, against the Brotherhood, but none of these things moved them or made them falter.

Some sang praises to God while they lay in heavy imprisonment, as though they were in great joy. Some did the same as they were being led to the place of execution and death, as though they were going to meet the bridegroom at a wedding, singing joyfully with uplifted voice that it rang out loudly. Others stepped to the place of death with a smile on their lips, praising God that they were accounted worthy to die the death of the Christian hero, and would not have preferred even to die a natural death in bed.

Others very earnestly admonished the crowds who stood about as spectators to repent and be converted. Others, who were imprisoned before they had yet received water-baptism, hastened to receive the baptism of blood,

---

others, to be an Anabaptist, even as all others who lead a true, pious Christian life are now almost everywhere given this name." (*Ibid.* vol. I, 1564, p. 203). Johann Valentin Andreae (1586-1654), a theologian of one of the Protestant state churches, wrote: "Whoever seeks now to lead an irreproachable life is called a fanatic, a Schwenckfelder, an Anabaptist." (Quoted from Möller-Kawerau, *Kirchengeschichte*, vol. III, Tübingen, 1899, p. 386). Heinrich Bullinger, the successor of Zwingli as the head of the state church of Zurich, says: "There are also those who in reality are not Anabaptists but have a pronounced averseness to the sensuality and frivolity of the world and therefore reprove sin and vice and are consequently called or misnamed Anabaptists by petulant persons; such should indeed not be molested in any way." (Bullinger, *Widertöufferen ursprung*, fol. 170r. For evidence that the danger of falling under the suspicion of "Anabaptism" for those who endeavored to live a consistent Christian life was actual, cf. Bossert, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer*. pp. 217, 259, 261, 429, 439, 616, 668, 687, 807, 808.

to be baptized therewith on a living faith for the sake of the truth of God. Yea, many who had never reached the Brotherhood or seen a congregation, but had only heard the preaching, stood firm in the faith when they were arrested, and did not let themselves be turned away by fire, water, sword or executioner.<sup>60</sup> Such who had just begun to taste of the truth and turn away from the wickedness of the world were often seized by the authorities, especially during the time that the royal provost of Austria went throughout the land. Wherever this provost found a man on the highway or in the field who confessed himself a brother and refused to recant, he forced him to kneel and beheaded him on the spot. In the villages he hanged people to their own doorposts and handed many over to the dungeons and prisons. Likewise, Aichele,<sup>61</sup> the imperial provost, who traveled up and down Suabia, seized the brethren and sisters wherever he found them and killed them with fire, sword, noose, and by drowning. And this shedding of blood has continued to this present day [toward the end of the sixteenth century].

No human being was able to take away out of their hearts what they had experienced, such zealous lovers of God were they. The fire of God burned within them. They would rather have died the bitterest death, yea ten

---

60. The reviewer of a book on Hutterian history in *Neues Wiener Abendblatt* (January 27, 1925) says: "In our time of religious impotency we can scarcely imagine that there ever were those who laid down their lives for their faith." A number of modern religious writers have contemptuously referred to those who were willing to suffer martyrdom for their faith as "bigots." The fact is that, considered from the point of view of the modern interpretation of the Christian religion, doctrine and creed are secondary and a willingness for martyrdom is uncalled for.

61. On Berthold Aichele see *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, vol. I, p. 14. Many brethren were put to death by this officer, in most instances without trial or sentence. On October 31, 1538, he executed the Hutterian minister Offrus Griesinger at Brixen in the Tyrol, but did this act with great remorse. The chronicler relates that, after this execution, "he lifted up his hand and swore an oath that he would never again execute a brother." (*Geschicht-Buch*, p. 142).



deaths, than to forsake the truth which they had espoused. They would take nothing in exchange for their faith in Christ, no lordship, no principality, no kingdom, yea not all the wealth and pleasures of the world, for they had a firm ground and assurance for their faith.

From the shedding of such innocent blood arose Christians everywhere, brothers all, for all this persecution did not take place without fruit. Many were moved thereby to give thought to these things, and to order their living, thinking, and doing in the light of the future, so many indeed that finally the authorities in many places would no longer execute them publicly, as for instance in the Tyrol, but condemned and slew them secretly by night so that none of the people could see, hear or know of it.

In some places they literally filled the prisons and dungeons with them, as did the Count Palatine of the Rhine. They thought they could dampen and extinguish the fire of God. But the prisoners sang in their prisons and rejoiced so that the enemies outside (who supposed that the prisoners would be in fears) themselves became more fearful than the prisoners and did not know what to do with them. Many others lay for years in dungeon and prison and endured all sorts of pain and torture. Others had holes burned through their cheeks and were then let free.

The rest, who escaped all this, were driven from one place to another, and even from one land to another. Like owls and bitterns they dared not come out of hiding in daylight. Often they had to hide in rocks and cliffs, in wild forests, caves and holes in the earth to save their lives. They were sought by constables with dogs, hunted like birds of the air. And yet they all were without guilt, without the least wicked deed; they neither did nor desired to do any one the least harm or injury.

They were defamed and slandered, and shamefully lied about. The most absurd falsehoods were told about

them, such as that they had goat-feet and ox-hoofs. It was said that they gave people to drink out of little flasks which brought them under their power. Among the lies spread about them was the report that they practised free love. They were commonly given such names as Anabaptists, seducers, heretics, rioters, fanatics.

Everywhere there were issued imperial, royal, and princely mandates, decrees and commands against them, that they should nowhere be suffered or tolerated but should be stamped out and annihilated, and that no one should dare give them shelter.

### THE STORY OF STEINABRUNN

The chronicles of the Brethren abound in moving accounts of particular instances of martyrdom. "No more heroic martyrology exists," says a well-known American historian.<sup>62</sup> For lack of space only one of the many stories of personal martyrdom is here given.

In the year 1539, on December 6, more than one hundred fifty brethren were seized at Steinabrunn in Austria and imprisoned in Castle Falkenstein. Among them were a number of delegates from the Philippite Brethren who had come for a conference with the Hutterites. Peter Riedemann, the author of the Confession of Faith of the Hutterites, arrived at Steinabrunn about a week after this to take part in the conference, but found only women and children who were in deep grief because all the men had been incarcerated in Falkenstein. The imprisoned Hutterian Brethren, having counselled with each other, agreed that those of the Philippite brotherhood, and those of their fellow prisoners who had not yet received baptism on the confession of faith, if in the face of tribulation and death they were constant in their testi-

---

62. Newman, A. H., *Balthasar Hubmaier and the Moravian Anabaptists*, in *The College Record, Review Supplement* (Goshen College), September, 1926, p. 20.

mony to the truth, should be recognized as brethren and "companions in tribulation and in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9). Yet it was understood that the standing of such as might be able to return to the community should be subject to the decision of the Brotherhood.

The chronicler of the Brethren wrote:<sup>63</sup>

King Ferdinand sent his marshal and several doctors [of theology] and priests to Falkenstein, with the executioner, their high priest, as their helper. In the Christmas season they attacked the imprisoned witnesses for the truth with great cunning, and tortured some on the rack and asked them what their ground and aim was, and where their treasures were. Thereupon they with one accord replied that Christ the Savior alone was their comfort, hope and dearest treasure, refuge and better portion, through whom they had obtained the grace and favor of the Father. At that the messenger of the king returned to Vienna. Then the king asked the clergy what should be done with the prisoners. Their decision was that they were worthy of death and should be sentenced to the galleys to drag out their lives at the galley benches in suffering and misery.

Thereupon the king's marshal, together with the provost called Lang Hans, and other horsemen, came to the imprisoned Brethren at Falkenstein. They questioned each brother separately again. The Brethren did not yield but remained steadfast to the truth. So they were chained together with iron collars and chains, two by two, to be led away.

In the meanwhile many sisters in the faith came to Castle Falkenstein having heard that the men were being

---

63. *Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder*, pp. 155-163; Van Braght, T. J., *Martyrs' Mirror of the Defenceless Christians*, Translated from the Dutch, Elkhart, Ind., 1886, pp. 434-436.

taken away to the galleys. Some of them were wives of imprisoned brethren, others were friends and relatives. Together they knelt down to pray the Father, the almighty God, with earnest petitions to keep and protect them from all evil and wickedness on the sea and grant them steadfastness so that they might remain loyal to the truth until death.

After the prayer the provost warned them to prepare to leave. Then they began to take leave one of another with breaking heart but strongly encouraging each other that everyone might be true to death. With that each one commended the other to the gracious protection of God, not knowing whether they should ever see one another again in the flesh.

Let each one judge for himself what a serious struggle that was for man and wife so to separate and leave their small children behind. Yea, truly, flesh and blood could not have borne it. The parting was so sorrowful that even the royal provost and his aides could not keep from weeping.

At that time Lord Hans Fünfkircher said that an inscription should be placed over the entrance of the castle stating that so long as Falkenstein had stood there had never been so large a number of pious people there.

Altogether ninety brethren were carried away to be delivered up to Andrea Doria, the imperial captain of the fleet at Trieste. God in his providence made it possible that during the entire long journey, each morning and evening, each one could offer his prayer to God unmolested. Likewise each one was allowed to comfort and admonish his brethren without fear. Yea, the military escort, the royal officers, often addressed them and urged them not to go through the towns and villages in silence but to testify to their faith in song and speech. So finally they reached the city of Trieste.



But since God always keeps his own in remembrance, even in the direst need, he put it into the hearts of some in the prison to trust the Lord in confident hope that he would provide for them a way of escape. So they counseled together in the fear of God and were thoroughly determined to suffer and die for the sake of the truth rather than to take any part in the godless robber-business of the galleys on the sea.

In the twelfth night of their imprisonment in Trieste they escaped.<sup>64</sup> They let themselves down over the city wall by means of the very ropes with which they were bound when led to prison. The greater part of them were able to return with joy and happy heart to the brotherhood in Moravia. But twelve persons were recaptured by the godless pursuit of the royal forces and were handed over to Andrea Doria, who sent them to the galleys to be used as oarsmen. But the Brethren risked their lives and let themselves be beaten with thongs and prongs before they would put a hand to the oar. It may well be imagined that if they remained true to the Lord, their life was one of great suffering.

#### A STAIN ON THE HISTORY OF CHRISTENDOM

The sad feature about Hutterian martyr history is the fact that the persecutors were Christians of the Roman Catholic and state church Protestant persuasions. In the second

---

64. The wardens of the prisons often sympathized with imprisoned Brethren and made possible their escape. Paul Glock, for example, who was imprisoned in Württemberg for 19 years, mostly in the castle of Hohenwittlingen, had won the full confidence of the commander of the castle who permitted him to go about freely upon pledging his word that he would not escape. When the commander had need of an absolutely reliable man for sending important messages, or valuables, he chose Paul Glock as the messenger. In the autumn of 1576 Glock rendered valuable service by assisting in combatting a disastrous fire in the castle. He was then released by a special act of the Duke of Württemberg, and returned to the Brotherhood in Moravia, where he was received with great joy.

half of the eighteenth century, when the Jesuits had well-nigh succeeded in extirpating the Hutterites, a remnant fled under the greatest difficulties to Wallachia in modern Roumania which was then under Moslem rule. In all church history there is scarcely anything more disheartening than to see the fathers of Protestantism follow the footsteps of Rome in point of liberty of conscience. The question, "How is it to be accounted for that those who had preached Christian liberty and demanded toleration from the Romanists, stained their hands with the blood of devoted Christians whose only crime was that they had the courage of their Christian convictions?" may be answered in a word: *compromise*. It is the old story of the consequences of giving the devil the little finger.

A short sketch of the origin of Protestant intolerance may be in order here. The ruler of Saxony, Elector Frederick the Wise, took every possible precaution for Luther's safety, as did the government of Zurich for the protection of Zwingli. The leaders in the reformation movement, in turn, decided that in the reformation of the church the ecclesiastical leaders should go hand in hand with the civil authorities. On the Wartburg, three years before Lutheranism was established in Saxony, Luther wrote a booklet entitled, *A Faithful Admonition*, in which he defended the opinion that the civil governments alone have the right to undertake the task of church reformation. He addressed his friends as follows:

Therefore be guided by the government. As long as the civil authorities do not take the matter in hand and give orders [regarding the reformation of the church], you should stand still with hand, mouth, and heart and should not be concerned about it. If you can influence the government to undertake and order it, you may do so. If the government is not willing to do something, neither should you be. But if you proceed notwithstanding, you

are doing wrong and are much worse than the other party [the Romanists].<sup>65</sup>

The heads of the state, with the consent of the reformers, finally introduced the new creed in their whole territory. This step immensely lightened the task of the reformers and assured the immediate outward success of the Reformation movement in Saxony, the canton Zurich and other states whose rulers embraced the Reformation. The people of these countries were never asked to unite with a new church. The governments demanded that they accept the deviations from Romanism in doctrine and practice, and the populations submitted to their orders. Since the new creed was established by the strong arm of the state, it was but natural that the state would suppress all dissent, and this meant persecution for the dissenters. Thus one step naturally led to another until dissenters in Protestant territory fared no better than those under Roman Catholic rulers. The first step leading in this direction was defended on the ground that the co-operation of the state in the reformation of the church seemed to be desirable.

The favor and aid of the state was within a short time considered so essential that, although the reformers held the Catholic mass to be blasphemy against God, they enjoined upon their friends and followers the duty to be contented with Catholic worship until the authorities of the state should be ready to introduce the Reformation. Untold offence was caused by this glaring inconsistency. It opened the eyes of those who later became known as the leaders of the Swiss Brethren to the real nature of state churchism.

---

65. Erlangen edition of *Luther's Works*. The German text of the passage follows: "Darum hab acht auf die Überkeit. So lange die nit zugreift und befelet, so halt du stille mit Hand, Mund und Herz, und nimm dich nichts an. Kannst du aber die Überkeit bewegen dass sie angreife und befehle, so magist du es thun. Will sie nit, so sollst du auch nit wollen. Fährist du aber fort, so bist du schon ungerecht und viel ärger denn das ander Teil."

Such were the first steps taken by Luther and Zwingli in a course that necessarily led to virtual uniformity with Rome in their treatment of dissenters. The fact that a wrong course had been entered upon at the outset was overlooked and ignored. Those who had these questions to decide apparently persuaded themselves that to maintain a unity of faith through the strong arm of the civil government was doing God a service. And yet, these same reformers had formerly defended the principle of liberty of conscience. What is worse, they now attempted to maintain the principle of tolerance in theory, notwithstanding their intolerance in practice. The opinion that their attitude on this point may be condoned on the supposition that the times were not ripe for tolerance and that the reformers were unenlightened regarding it, is not true to fact. It is clear, then, that the union of church and state entailed unmistakable compromise which proved disastrous to true church reformation. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that principle was sacrificed for expediency.



## CHAPTER III

### PERSECUTION AND SUPPRESSION OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN MORAVIA. SETTLE- MENTS IN HUNGARY AND TRAN- SYLVANIA

1593 — 1662

In the year 1593 war began between Turkey and Austria. This period was for the Hutterites a time of severe oppression. The chronicler reports as follows:

From the year 1593 the Brotherhood in Moravia had few quiet days and peaceful times, but had to endure much tribulation and suffering, particularly at the hands of the soldiers. The latter very frequently quartered themselves in our houses often staying a long time, so that their consumption of food and drink caused a great loss to the Brotherhood. This lasted many years in succession and the longer it lasted the worse it became.

Likewise, several lords and noblemen on whose territory the Brethren lived, dealt with them in unmerciful tyranny, burdened them with unbearable taxes, withheld wages from those who had worked for them on their large estates, and finally discharged them and drove them off by force with empty hands, robbing them of all their movable and immovable goods.<sup>66</sup>

---

66. In 1596 the Brethren wrote: "Sometimes a nobleman will permit us to settle in his territory and later will drive us out and we thus lose our real estate, not to mention that some do not pay us the wages agreed upon for our workers." *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 444. It occurred even in the preceding period that the Brethren were driven from the

This tribulation came upon some of the communities notwithstanding the fact that the governor of Moravia at that time, Friedrich von Zierotin, was a friend and patron of the Brethren, and came to their aid in every possible way. Concerning him the chronicler at that time wrote as follows:

I do not consider it out of place to report here how Lord Friedrich von Zierotin, Lord of Selowitz, at that time governor of Moravia, protected the Brotherhood for a long time, having learned to esteem them through thorough acquaintance of them. He permitted many to live on his estates, and protected them as a father does his children. Not in vain did the Brotherhood seek refuge with him in times of danger. But finally in the year 1598, he too came to the end of life when God the Almighty summoned him home from this vale of sorrow. How the Lord will requite him for all the kindness he manifested toward the Brotherhood remains in God's own hands. May he grant him the eternal heavenly kingdom.<sup>67</sup>

A time of great tribulation came over the congregations in the twelfth year of this war (1605) as a result of the invasion of the Turks and Tartars and their allies, the Hungarians. Not less than sixteen colonies were destroyed within three months; eighty-one members of the Brotherhood were murdered and two hundred and forty were carried off into slavery in Turkey.

At this time and in the later wars, the Brethren stood

---

territory of certain lords where they had established colonies. The principality of Nikolsburg, in which they had a number of congregations, about 1579 came under the rule of the strict Roman Catholic nobleman, Adam von Dietrichstein who, in 1579, undertook through the aid of Jesuits to compel his subjects to accept the Roman Catholic creed. The Protestant population of the principality on the whole followed his orders in this regard, rather than to pay the heavy fines imposed upon them and to endure imprisonment, while the Hutterian Brethren "heeded them not in the least," as the chronicler states.

67. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 328. Christoph Andreas Fischer remarks that the Brethren spoke of Friedrich von Zierotin commonly as "unser Fritz." *Vier und funfftzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 39.

true to their principle of non-resistance throughout. The first war-tax was laid upon them, as upon all other subjects, in 1579 which was before the beginning of the war with the Turks. To pay such a tax was contrary to their principles, and the Brethren refused it. The lords, in consequence, confiscated some of their property, such as cattle or sheep to the extent of the war taxes. "We suffer the spoiling of our goods" (Heb. 10:34), writes the chronicler, "rather than do what would be a stain, spot and burden on our consciences." The confiscation of property for this purpose was repeated in 1584 and 1589; and during the wars beginning in 1596 the war tax was collected yearly in this way.

#### THE TRIBULATIONS OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN THE FIRST YEARS OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

In the year 1618 a disastrous religious war, which is known as the Thirty Years' War, broke out as a result of the rebellion of the Bohemian people against their Catholic King Ferdinand. It developed into a life and death struggle between Protestant and Roman Catholic states. The Moravian government made an alliance with Bohemia and expelled the Jesuits. In the year 1619 an army of King Ferdinand, under General Tampier, invaded Moravia to punish the land for its secession from the house of Hapsburg. This army completely destroyed, within two months, no less than twelve of the forty remaining Hutterian colonies in Moravia, and plundered and devastated seventeen others. Forty members of the Brotherhood were murdered.

In the years 1620 and 1621 the Brethren endured untold suffering from the invading armies, especially after the almost total destruction of the Protestant army in the battle of White Mountain near Prague. This event led the Roman Catholic party to determine on the suppression of all other churches. Imperial armies from various provinces of the empire ranged through the unhappy land. The Hutterian

households suffered more than the remaining population of Moravia. The heads of the ruling church favoring the forcible suppression of the Anabaptists, the soldiers did not seem to doubt in the least that it was right and proper, yea, a work pleasing to God, to persecute and kill them.

Furthermore Moravia was on the whole a poor country. The peasants lived for the most part in small houses or cabins, while many of the Hutterian communities inhabited large dwellings. The plundering soldiers expected to secure in their houses money and valuables, which were, however, not usually to be found. Torture of all sorts was used to force the people to surrender their supposed treasures. All this seemed to the soldiers to be a mild punishment for a people who, in their opinion, deserved death. Many were murdered. Many of the houses of the Brotherhood were totally destroyed; others were repeatedly plundered. At times not only the bedding was taken but even the clothing was torn from the people's backs. In one night, in the year 1620, 56 people were murdered in the bruderhof at Pribitz by a Polish army, and sixty others wounded, of whom many soon died of their wounds. In the wake of the war came devastating plagues. According to the reckoning of the contemporary chronicler the Brotherhood in one year alone lost one-third of its members by death.

The chronicler of the Brethren describes the terrible cruelty of the armies as follows:

It was stated above that the year 1621 began with much tribulation. The robbing, plundering, and burning of houses carried on by the soldiers continued throughout this and the following year. Altogether it was a very fearful, miserable and evil time. It is impossible to write or tell of all the great and inhuman cruelties which were inflicted upon us and others in this godless, accursed and devilish war at the hands of the Spanish, Walloon, Polish and German imperial forces. I cannot tell what awful devilish things were perpetrated on many good, pious and



honorable sisters who had loved sobriety and purity from their youth, yea, on children, both boys and girls. Women with child and mothers on their deathbed as well as virgins were most outrageously attacked. The men were burned with glowing irons and red-hot pans; their feet were held in the fire until their toes were burned off; wounds were cut into which powder was poured and then set afire; fingers and ears were cut off, eyes forced out by inhuman torture; men were hung up by the neck like thieves; all sorts of such diabolical brutality and unheard of godlessness were committed, half the shame of which is not to be written. Such things were openly practised by the imperial soldiery who believed themselves to be the best of Christians. It would be impossible for one who had not himself seen and witnessed it to believe that a human being could conduct himself as did these demon-possessed men. It would have been no wonder had the heavens turned pale, the earth shaken and all the elements trembled; yea, one would suppose that the devil himself would have been more fearful of the might, power, glory and majesty of God than these shameless men. May God lead them to realize it, to whom and to whose righteous judgment we commit everything.<sup>68</sup>

Upon the report of the approach of the great imperial army in the late autumn of 1620, several congregations took to flight. The more remote bruderhofs gave them refuge for a time. Later many escaped over the Hungarian border to Sabatisch where in and near the small household at this place for a time more than 3,000 were harbored. In January, 1621, many proceeded farther with great difficulty over the Hungarian mountains and found protection in Schächtitz, Weidowitz, and other localities where the lords were favorable to them. As a consequence of the severe trials through

---

68. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 565.

which they passed, several hundred of those who fled over the mountains soon fell victim to epidemic diseases.

### A FORCED COLONIZATION

The regent of Transylvania, Bethlen Gabor, had learned to know and highly esteem the Brethren in Hungary. He decided to establish a colony of them on his estate at Alwintz in Transylvania. The chronicler reports the singular procedure of this colonization as follows:

When therefore, as aforesaid, a portion of the people had in dire need fled across the Hungarian mountains to seek an asylum and place of abode, it came about that after about ten weeks, on April 2, 1621, several Transylvanian commissioners came to them at Schächtitz while others went to Weidowitz. They carried an open letter containing a mandate, and brought with them a large number of horsemen and wagons. They disclosed to the brethren, by letter as well as by word of mouth, the intention and purpose of their ruler, the Prince Bethlen Gabor, of Transylvania, that they should make preparations to go with them to Transylvania. In that country, they were told, they would be provided with everything necessary to start a colony. "In this document," the commissioners said, showing them the letter from the prince, "are contained all the articles in which our gracious lord and master, now king of Transylvania under the Hungarian crown, promises that you shall not be made serfs but shall be and remain a free people and be recognized as such. You will be protected by the provincial and national authorities so that at all times you may freely exercise your religion and conduct your business to your own advantage and according to your own pleasure."

When the brethren learned the contents of the eight articles of the letter and heard the friendly words, the commissioners of the prince still noticed in them a disinclination to go. So they seized forcibly eighty-four souls,

old and young; and eight days later another one hundred and one, among them the brother Franz Walter, a minister, and led them away. In due time they reached Alwintz in Transylvania, where the Princess Susanna Carolina received them kindly, for which the brethren were very glad and felt that they could not thank God sufficiently. Since there was no other dwelling available for them, they had to live for a time in the horse-stables of the prince.

On March 17, 1622, the authorities, together with the princess, came to Alwintz. The princess summoned the oldest brethren and gave them permission to build a house for their dwelling. This permission the brethren accepted gratefully and began to build the house in the same year and to organize the brotherhood according to the order which prevailed in Moravia in the brotherhood there.

This colonization turned out later to be one of the important events in the history of the Hutterian Brethren. When in the second half of the eighteenth century the congregations in Hungary were totally destroyed by the Jesuits with the support of the government, the precious treasure of the faith of the fathers was preserved by a number of members of the congregation in Alwintz. These fled to Wallachia (Roumania) together with a large number of Lutheran exiles from Carinthia who, through the influence of the brethren at Alwintz, had accepted the Hutterian confession. "Without doubt," says the chronicler, "God so ordained that one little spark remained of the greatly blessed church in Moravia."

#### FURTHER HISTORY OF THE BRETHREN, THEIR EXPULSION FROM MORAVIA

In the year 1620, according to the "old, praiseworthy custom," a number of brethren were again sent out as messengers of the gospel to various parts of Germany. "At

this," writes the chronicler, "many marveled that they, as a non-resistant people, could travel so safely, in great danger, when almost no one else, of high or low degree, could do so."<sup>69</sup>

Again the chronicler writes:

The Lord in heaven gave so much grace and blessing that this year, although the country was full of soldiery everywhere and almost no one could travel in safety, the blessed memorial feast of our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ could be held in ten places with special joy and thanksgiving to God. On account of the war-time dangers this had not been possible in the year before. Each one was permitted to return home in peace. The Lord alone be thanked for this.<sup>70</sup>

A sworn enemy of the Brethren, the Bishop of Olmütz, Cardinal Franz von Dietrichstein, a son of Adam von Dietrichstein, and as such inheritor of the principality of Nikolsburg, was appointed governor of Moravia after the great victory of the imperial forces in 1620. He succeeded by open deception in getting possession of the money which had been saved in the Hutterian communities during the times of peace as a protection against hard times. He apparently was of the opinion that deceit is permissible when used against such folk. If it was right to kill these people as heretics, it could scarcely be considered a great crime to rob them. Besides, robbery was no worse than other outrages committed in the war. We quote again from the *Larger Church Chronicle*:

In the year 1621 a very sad, painful and grievous affair took place in connection with Brother Rudolph Hirtzel, who had shortly before been entrusted with the

---

69. *Ibid.*, p. 574.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 588.



oversight of the entire Brotherhood. It happened in this fashion:

On June 2 of this year Cardinal von Dietrichstein had Brother Rudolph, together with two other brethren, taken by military force, in the name of his Imperial Majesty, from Neumühl to the castle of Nikolsburg.

After they had been imprisoned for a number of weeks the Cardinal and others demanded of Rudolph, since he was the head pastor, that he reveal the hiding place of the savings of the Brotherhood. They accompanied this demand with terrible threats: If he would not do this voluntarily, they would deal cruelly with him and the rest of the elders, would destroy the entire Brotherhood, root and branch, and would begin the next day at Nikolsburg and Neumühl.<sup>71</sup> If, however, he would reveal the location of the money, the emperor would take us into his protection and endow us with freedom and privileges.

They also said that the imperial authorities did not in the least mean to confiscate the money, but only desired to share information about it, where it was, how much, and in what form, and wished only to aid in its safekeeping so that it should not fall into the hands of the rebels and be used by them to strengthen their war against the emperor.<sup>72</sup> By such and similar talk they finally persuaded Ru-

---

71. One of the largest colonies of the Brethren was located in this small village. Here the head pastors resided.

72. The chronicles state that Cardinal Adam von Dietrichstein had promised with a solemn oath that the money would not be taken from them. (*Geschicht-Buch*, p. 579). In 1579 and the following years, when the Hutterian Brethren constantly resisted the attempt made by Adam von Dietrichstein, the cardinal's father, to convert them to Catholicism (cf. note 66), Franz von Dietrichstein seems to have become embittered against them. As a cardinal he was, in the first period of the Thirty Years' War, compelled to leave Moravia. It is said that he vowed with an oath that he would not tolerate the Anabaptists in the land if he returned. Obviously it was his calculated intention to expel them, with their old and sick and small children, at the beginning of the winter season, believing they then scarcely had another choice but to accept the Catholic creed. Not only did he undertake to drive out those who would not deny their faith but he had done all in his power to make the Hungarian authorities take the same attitude toward the Brethren and refuse them a refuge.

dolph Hirtzel to reveal, in the supposed interest of the safety of the Brotherhood, the hiding place of the product of the hard and bitter sweat of many pious folk. This money, or as much of it as he could find, the Cardinal immediately seized. So the Brotherhood lost most of their hard-earned savings. Rudolph Hirtzel was by the judgment of the entire Brotherhood excommunicated at Pausram. However, he acknowledged his guilt humbly, and with tears sought repentance and re-instatement to membership, which he could not fully attain, however, but died at Goeding on April 27, of the next year.

In the summer of the year 1622 the Cardinal von Dietrichstein went to Vienna and obtained from Emperor Ferdinand full power and authority to expel the Hutterian Brotherhood from Moravia. Two days after his return he sent his officials to lock up and seal all the store rooms, granaries, cellars, etc. in the three colonies in the principality of Nikolsburg, namely Nikolsburg, Tracht, and Niemschitz. The people were driven out and the buildings guarded by soldiers. Then an imperial document of the following content was read to the assembled people:

They and their fellow-believers would no longer be tolerated, either in Moravia or in any lands over which the imperial authority extended. They would find no safety in Transylvania. They would surely perish, for the Emperor's arm was long. But those who would turn away from their error and let themselves be instructed by the priests and Jesuits, the same should remain in the households of the community, have the use of the property and be protected and loved by the emperor and the cardinal, the same as all other subjects.<sup>73</sup>

Thereupon all were asked personally whether they would obey this order. There were at these three places 230

---

73. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 567.

persons, young and old, "who were frightened by the tribulation and suffering of Christ," and who fell away from their faith [and united with the Roman Church]. The remainder declared that they would remain true to their faith and conviction, "whether it meant life or death."

Several brethren, says the chronicler further, especially Jacob Breitensteiner, overseer at Tracht, told the cardinal before many witnesses to his face: "I do not believe that I could be saved in the papal faith that has burned our houses, cut down our men and shamed our wives and daughters. Those that do such things are good Christians with you, even though they behave worse than Turks; but pious people, who support themselves by the work of their hands and do no human being any harm, are banished from the land." And with such words he struck the cardinal dumb so that he was unable to make answer.

The brethren at these three places were driven from their houses without any of their goods and property. They were not permitted to take even as much as each could carry, and no tools at all. All the cattle and everything that was in the fields and vineyards they had to leave behind. At Wisternitz the cardinal's men even seized and stripped brethren and sisters, seeking for money in their clothes and shoe-soles. From the carpenter they took his hammer and from the tailor his scissors, and drove them out with empty hands. In such manner they were requited for the faithful services they had rendered the cardinal and his predecessors with greatest diligence for many years.

The elders wrote the cardinal and humbly begged, if they had to leave his territory, at least to permit them to take with them their cattle and moveable goods, the sweat of their brows, and that he should not sin against them by taking their goods (which God would not permit to go unpunished). Further they begged him repeatedly, both

orally and in writing, (since he himself had declared that their persecution and fate depended on him alone, and outside of him there would be no help), that he would extend to them such sympathy as civil rulers have for their subjects, grant them refuge for the winter, at least for the aged and sickly who could be gathered together at two or three places in Moravia, and that he would take into account the more than eighty years they had lived in Moravia and served many lords faithfully and honorably.<sup>74</sup>

To this petition the cardinal answered laughingly and with mocking words that he would hand them a printed reply. Thereupon he sent them a printed mandate, which he issued against them in the Emperor's name on the 28th of September, 1622, demanding that all men and women who call themselves Hutterites must vacate Moravia within four weeks from the date of this mandate on penalty of death, and never put foot on that land again. Those who would turn away from their error into the right way should be given every help, aid, assistance and support.

The petitions were altogether without success. In the same way as described concerning the above-named three places, the Brethren were driven from the households at Austerlitz, Dämorschitz, Aleckowitz, Maskowitz, Gostel, and Altemarkt. And within a short time the Brethren had to leave also all the other colonies in Moravia, altogether 24 households. As said above in many places the houses had been burned down. Everywhere they had to leave with empty hands and flee the country at the beginning of the cold season, abandoning even the necessary food. Of wheat and rye alone they left 24,000 metzen behind. [A metze equals about one bushel]. At this time famine conditions obtained in consequence of the war. Food was extraordi-

---

74. Obviously it was intentional that they were driven out at the beginning of the cold season of the year. The purpose was to compel them to forsake their faith.



narily high in price. A metze of wheat was worth about ten thaler.

### THE BRETHREN IN HUNGARY

The Brotherhood fled to Hungary where they were received by several lords. They had established a colony in this land as early as 1546 at Sabatisch (near the Moravian border); then in 1588 at Levar in the comitat of Pressburg. New colonies were now established in Kesselsdorf, Farkenschin, St. Johann and other places. Most of the people who had been in the households at Maskowitz and Aleckowitz in Moravia were sent to Alwintz in Transylvania. In winter time, suffering untold hardships and trials, about 700 persons under the leadership of three ministers made the long journey to Alwintz. Upon their arrival severe epidemics broke out among them, as a result of which many died. A small group migrated to Croatia upon invitation of a nobleman.

During this flight in the cold season of the year and also later, the people suffered exceedingly, since there was a lack not only of food but also of clothing, bedding, and shelter. The contemporary chronicler of the Brethren wrote concerning this persecution:

But the Lord let this tribulation come upon his children as a special test and refining fire. Many who were of superficial mind and insincere heart did not stand the test. Although they had left Moravia (like the children of Israel fled from Egypt), when the suffering, tribulation, deprivation, and hunger, cold, and nakedness came upon them, many looked back to Egypt where they had had bread to the full, and not a few of them fell back. Many did not leave Moravia at all but forsook the Brotherhood. So the number of the pious was greatly reduced.<sup>75</sup>

---

75. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 571.

The Brethren were permitted to cross the border into Hungary against the Emperor's will. At the urgent request of Cardinal von Dietrichstein the Emperor, in December, 1622, demanded of the Hungarian lords to refuse toleration to the Anabaptists. But the lords were not willing to accede to this request without the consent of the Landtag.

In the months of October and November, 1623, the Brotherhood in Hungary suffered much from the armies which passed through. A number of households and houses, where some of the brethren lived, were destroyed by fire and others were plundered. At the request of several Moravian lords, a number of the brethren returned to Moravia to resume their service, having been promised freedom of religion, and protection. Several smaller groups followed them on account of the famine in Hungary. Thereupon the Cardinal von Dietrichstein issued a strict decree in the name of the Emperor in March, 1624. It read as follows:

That within fourteen days from date all who are of the Hutterian persuasion must leave Moravia on pain of death. Should, after the expiration of this time, any one of them be found in Moravia, he will be put to death without further formality, by being hanged to the closest tree or burned at the stake.<sup>76</sup>

The Brethren were to be hunted down and killed like wild animals. Turning to the Roman Catholic Church was the only escape from exile and death. Those who remained true to their convictions, fled back to Hungary. Through this persecution, says the chronicler, "there was again a falling away and many, who loved their belly and the lust of the world more than God and his righteousness, forsook their faith and the Brotherhood rather than to return to Hungary. But those who were of a pious and sincere heart endured it all patiently and praised God that they could still find a place to serve him."

---

76. *Ibid.*, p. 579.

A number of Moravian nobles, nevertheless, retained some of the Brethren in their service "on account of their industry, faithfulness and trustworthiness." In the following year the Cardinal again issued a severe edict in Austria and Moravia against the Anabaptists, and on December 17, 1628 he warned the nobility who still had Hutterites in their service of the consequences, threatening them with imperial disfavor and punishment. Thereupon all the remaining Brethren were dismissed by the lords and returned to Hungary.

In the autumn of the year 1626 the Imperial Generalissimo Wallenstein marched through Hungary with a great army. Almost the entire Brotherhood took to flight. For four months they were absent from their homes, suffering much from cold and hunger. Their houses were plundered but not destroyed.

In the long period of persecution and privation from 1619 to about 1631 the total number of members of the Hutterian Brotherhood in Hungary was apparently reduced to less than one thousand.<sup>77</sup>

For about two decades following this the Brotherhood was almost altogether spared from robbery and plundering by armies. The chronicler tells of a great famine in the years 1638 and 1639:

The need was so great that there were those who mixed white clay with the flour, and baked bread of this. But the Lord, the faithful God, to whom be eternal praise, blessed his people through the faithful elders so that they suffered no want nor hunger, but were even able to help many others who were in need, so much so that in some households as many as fifty and sixty and even eighty adults and children were daily fed.<sup>78</sup>

---

77. This statement is found in a sermon (in manuscript) by Hans Friedrich Kuentsch who died in 1659 at Kesselsdorf in Hungary. Cf. Beck, *Geschichts-Buecher*, p. 496.

78. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 621.

In the year 1645 most of the houses of the Brethren were again plundered by the armies. To add to their troubles a devastating plague took many lives. "Again the Brotherhood came into great poverty," says the chronicler.

AN AUTHOR OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ON THE LIFE  
OF THE BRETHREN IN HUNGARY

For a quarter of a century the Hutterian Brotherhood had gone through the most discouraging experiences. Yet, to all appearances, the condition of their colonies in Hungary was such that those who visited them, received decidedly favorable impressions. Hans Jakob Christoph Grimmelshausen, in his *Simplicissimus*, a famous novel of the time of the Thirty Years' War, gives the following account of the life of the Hutterites in Hungary<sup>79</sup>:

Finally I recognized from all my studies that there is no better science than that of theology, if through it one is led to live for God and serve him. And I became acquainted with a way of living which would be more angelic than human, namely if a community could be founded consisting of married and unmarried persons, men and women who, according to the manner of the Anabaptists, would endeavor simply and only to win under a competent leader, by the labor of the hands, the needed temporal support and busy itself in the remaining time with the praise and service of God and the salvation of their souls. I have personally seen in Hungary in the Anabaptist colonies such a life that, if those good people had not been mixed up in false and heretical opinions, contrary to the general principles of the Christian church, I would have joined them

---

79. The author of this work, himself a Catholic, had visited the Hutterites in Hungary and wrote from his own observations. Chapter 19 of Book 5 contains the discussion of the Hutterites under the title: *Etwas wenig von denen ungarischen Widertäufern und ihrer Art zu leben*. Hans Jakob Christoph von Grimmelshausen (1625-1679) wrote his *Der Abenteuerliche Simplicissimus* in 1668 and published it in 1669.



or at least would have held their life to be the most blessed in the whole world.

In the first place they had large treasure<sup>80</sup> and an abundance of provisions which however were by no means used extravagantly or unnecessarily. No profanity, no dissatisfaction, no impatience was observed among them, yea, one heard no unnecessary word. There I saw the craftsmen working in their shops as though they were under contract. Their school teachers taught the youth as though they were their own children. Nowhere did I see men and women together but everywhere each sex was performing its own work apart from the other. I found rooms in which there were only nursing mothers who, without the supervision of men, were abundantly supplied, together with their infant children, with the necessary attention by their sisters. The duty of caring for the nursing mothers and children was committed to the widows alone.

Elsewhere I saw over a hundred women with distaffs. One was a washwoman, another a bed-maker, a third a stable-maid, a fourth, dishwasher, a fifth, linen maid, and so all others also had a particular work to do. And just as the duties were systematically assigned to the women, so each one of the men and youths knew his business, which he performed in the most praiseworthy manner, and unconstrained.

If one or the other became ill, that one had a special caretaker; also each sex had a physician and an apothecary, although due to the praiseworthy diet and good habits they seldom became ill, on account of which I saw among them many a well-preserved man in a healthy and

---

80. Grimmelshausen's statement concerning this point is, of course, founded on hearsay and surmise. It is true that communities such as those of the Hutterites could not live "from hand to mouth," and that the officials in charge of the economic affairs laid by capital reserves, for their operations which were on necessity used to buy current consumption goods also.

peaceful high old age such as are scarcely to be found elsewhere. There was no anger, no jealousy, no vengeful spirit, no envy, no enmity, no concern about temporal things, no pride, no vanity, no gambling, no remorse; in a word, there was throughout and altogether a lovely harmony. They also called each other brothers and sisters.

Now, a community leading such a noble, blessed life as these Anabaptist heretics I should have liked to establish within the Roman Catholic Church for, as far as I could see, it surpasses even the monastic life. I thought to myself: If you could accomplish such a task and establish such a noble way of Christian living among orthodox Christians under the protection of the authorities, you would be a second Saint Dominic or Saint Francis. I often said to myself: If you could just convert the Anabaptists so that they would teach your brethren in the faith their art of living, what a blessed man you would be. Or, if you could only persuade your fellow Christians that they should lead, like these Anabaptists, such an apparently Christian and noble life, what would you not have accomplished thereby.

#### COLONIES AT BODOK AND MANNHEIM

In 1645 Prince Rakoczy forced the Brotherhood to establish a colony on his estate at Bodok in the comitat of Zemplin, in Upper Hungary. The chronicler gives the following account of this colonization:

Prince Rakoczy had made urgent requests that a colony be established at Bodok. The project was finally carried out against the wishes of the elders who opposed it in every possible way. They were given to understand by the prince that they had the option of complying with his demand of their own free will, or through the power which he had at his disposal. Now, in order to prevent great loss to the entire Brotherhood through the severe measures that were threatening, it was decided that the

colony of Tschäskowitz move to Bodok. Subsequently the prince sent wagons and men in quantities sufficient to transport them. It was with great regret and many tears that they undertook the far journey.<sup>81</sup>

The colony at Bodok did not prosper. Then, in the years 1650 to 1652, there was a great famine in those parts. The colonies in other parts of Hungary and in Alwintz had to give them such heavy support that all together became poor. After some years the greater part of those in Bodok died of the pestilence. Of those who were left after 1668, a part moved to Levar in Hungary and a part to Alwintz in Transylvania.<sup>82</sup>

An attempt was made in the year 1604 to establish a household in Elbing, West Prussia.<sup>83</sup>

In the year 1654 a household was established in the city of Mannheim on the Rhine with the permission of the Elector of the Palatinate.<sup>84</sup> This household was granted special privileges of release from military service, etc.<sup>85</sup> It existed until 1684 when it was voluntarily dissolved.

---

81. *Ibid.*, p. 632.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 642.

83. E. H. Correll in *Das Schweizerische Täufer-Mennonitentum*, pp. 16f, note 2, gives as source, S. L. Neubauer, *Mährische Brüder in Elbing*, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, Gotha, 1912, 3. Heft, pp. 447 ff.

84. Cf. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 492. Also Walter, *Geschichte der Stadt Mannheim*.

85. Correll, *op. cit.*, p. 82, note 2.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DECLINE AND DESTRUCTION OF THE BROTHERHOOD IN HUNGARY AND TRANSYLVANIA

During the first century of the history of the Hutterian Brotherhood a number of the head pastors were men of exceptional ability. Among them may be mentioned, besides Jacob Hutter, Peter Riedemann of Silesia, 1542-1556, Peter Walpot of the Tyrol, 1565-1578 (who as a boy of eight years had witnessed the heroic death by fire of George Blau-rock in 1529, at Klausen in the Tyrol), and Claus Braidl of Hesse, 1583-1611. The last of the outstanding leaders was Andreas Ehrenpreis who was head pastor from 1639 to 1662. He undertook with considerable success to check the spiritual decline which had made itself felt for some time.

Various causes for the prevailing decline may be noted. Not a few who lacked religious conviction and consecration had united with the Church. Of this there is unmistakable evidence. For example, the chronicler states that in 1586 a few hundred Swiss arrived in Moravia to unite with the Brotherhood "many of whom had decided to come because of the famine." "Yet they expressed a willingness," the same writer says further, "to embrace the faith and amend their lives, and were accepted on trial in the hope that they would make good." This means that they were admitted into the communities, and those whose life gave no cause for complaint were eventually received into membership upon confession of the faith.

In the first half century of the history of Hutterianism, living in a community of the Brethren was prized as a great



privilege by the members of the Brotherhood, despite the restrictions which such a life entailed. When through the force of circumstances brethren and sisters were separated from the community, there was a sincere longing for the "community of saints." Many extant letters bear testimony to this fact. In the great persecution of 1548, after having for weeks been sojourning in the woods, the Brethren saw themselves compelled, because of the cold season, to seek shelter and to separate into small groups. "So they must part," says the chronicler, "and be scattered and separated from each other. This was to them the greatest distress of all. They would rather have suffered death, if it had been the Lord's will, than to be deprived of the blessings of Christian fellowship and attending the worship of the Brotherhood."

In the first period of Hutterian history all members of the communities willingly devoted their time and strength to the good of the common cause. The compelling motive was love to God and the brethren on the ground of sincere Christian conviction, which was evidenced by their willingness to suffer hardships and martyrdom. The members of the church willingly served the Lord and each other by conscientiously attending to their daily duties. Every effort put forth in the work assigned to them was realized to be in the interest of the cause of Christ to which they had dedicated their lives. Those who worked for wages for the nobles and for other employers turned their earnings over to the Brotherhood, receiving in turn their clothes and other necessities of life from the "ministers of secular needs" in the communities.

But this ideal way of Christian living began to decline toward the end of the sixteenth century. It was found necessary in many of the workshops to assign to every worker each day the amount of work he was expected to do. Various other problems and vexatious questions arose. Could one who had done his day's task, work for his personal interest during the rest of the day, or after the regular working

hours? If this was permitted, was there not the temptation to be more concerned about the quality of the extra work than of that which was done for the community? And how about procuring the material needed for the irregular work? Would it not mean much inconvenience and extra effort for the foreman to keep account of the material used for the self-interest of the workers?<sup>86</sup> Again, since there were many who did not approve of working for self-interest, would not brotherly unity and contentment be jeopardized under such an arrangement? Also among those who worked for wages for the nobility and other employers the question of extra work and extra compensation arose. Such questions came more and more to the foreground as the earlier spiritual fervor and moral earnestness of the Brotherhood waned.

Again, the undertaking of great business enterprises, such as contracting for the erection of large buildings for the nobles and others in Moravia and the adjoining provinces, did not prove to be for the highest spiritual interests of the Brotherhood. Neither was it consistent with the general character and aims of the Church. It meant entering into competition with those who were not in a position to do a given work at so low a price as the Hutterian communities.

A period of general decline came through the evil influences to which the Brotherhood was subjected during the Thirty Years' War and the successive Turkish wars. A minister of the Brethren, in a sermon preached in 1656 said: "How disastrous is the influence of the Thirty Years' War! How great the unrighteousness in which it has resulted! Everywhere it would take a month to describe these evils. And this pernicious leaven has contaminated our Brotherhood and it is now almost impossible to set things in order again." Another Hutterian preacher of the same period said in a sermon: "It would require a whole day to speak of the

---

86. Cf. Loserth, J., *Der Communismus der Mährischen Wiedertäufer im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Graz, 1897.

various evils which have spread and taken root within thirty years. A plow drawn by a hundred horses could not go deep enough to root up these weeds." Andreas Ehrenpreis, in his farewell address shortly before his death, said:

"We know by the bitterest experience that the enemy is busily engaged in planting his abominable weeds into the church of the Lord. There is need, above all things, for prevailing prayer, for unrighteousness increases greatly not only among others but among us as well."

The author of the so-called *Smaller Church Chronicle*, Johannes Waldner, says that in books written in this period complaint is found "that a majority of the Brotherhood departed from the simplicity of Christ and the filial obedience which they owed to God and the Church, and followed only their own inclinations. They did not abide by any regulations and were no longer satisfied with the cut of clothing which until that time was in use in the Church. Especially those who were in the service of the lords began to dress in worldly fashion, indulged in covetousness and self-interest, secretly kept some of the money they had earned, became accustomed to the use of wine," etc.

While the right of doing extra work for self-interest was denied by the Brotherhood and the leaders, an increasing minority desired just such a departure from the old order. Also there was a steady increase in the number of the indolent who apparently had united with the Church from a desire to live off the fruit of the hard work of others, rather than from religious conviction. The many conscientious, earnest souls that were yet found in the communities were confronted by the task of providing for this class, a task that was becoming more and more difficult, as may directly be further shown.

The head pastors and their assistants and other leaders in the Brotherhood united in strongly opposing the many innovations and abuses which found their way into the commu-

nities. They drew up *ordnungen* (rules and regulations) for the members of various crafts. Not a few of these have come down to us, particularly from the time of Andreas Ehrenpreis. But it was found impossible to accomplish through law what had formerly been brought about through spontaneous Christian love. Self-seeking and a lack of brotherly love manifested themselves in many ways. Under these circumstances the community of goods became more and more of a burden. From this period dates the saying,

Die Gemeinschaft wär' nicht schwer  
Wenn der Eigennutz nicht wär',

which might be translated:

Communal life would not be hard  
If there were not such self-regard.

At Alwintz in Transylvania the brotherhood for a considerable time seems to have held to the old standards of the Church more faithfully than the older communities in Hungary. The chronicler, having related a great loss, in 1622, through epidemics, says further:

But, after they had faithfully endured tribulation and storms, God granted them a time of peace and quiet during which the brotherhood was able to establish itself more firmly, and God blessed them also with temporal goods. A large number of crafts of various sort were established which had hitherto never been known to this land; for this reason the Church was granted protection and full liberty by the prince. The prince was very favorably disposed toward them and took great pleasure in their industry, integrity, and piety. The church had to provide men for his service, and wherever the mills of the prince were to be found in the land, there were members of the church who were responsible for their operation. So in temporal matters the church prospered indeed, and was blessed by God so that it grew and was built up.

In the years 1663 and 1664 the buildings of a number of the colonies in Hungary were destroyed by the Turks and



Tartars, and no less than 122 of the inmates were carried away into slavery. At Alwintz the Bruderhof was burned in 1661; it was later rebuilt. Through this war, says the chronicler, "the whole Brotherhood was again thrust into the greatest poverty, for even crops and garden produce were destroyed."

It was decided in a general meeting held at Sabatisch, April 7, 1665, to send two brethren to the Netherlands to lay the needs of the Brotherhood before the Mennonite congregations there. The delegates visited the churches in Holland, Zealand, Flanders, and Friesland and obtained large contributions for the needs of the Brethren in Hungary.

In the year 1674 an unsuccessful effort was made by the Jesuits and the civil authorities to compel the Brethren in Hungary to have their infants baptized. However, in 1688, a faction of the brotherhood in Levar consented to this practice through the efforts of Cardinal Leopold von Kolonitsch. A persecution arose in 1725 in which fifteen members of the church in Levar were seized and imprisoned for refusing to consent to have their infants baptized by a priest. The brotherhood at this place finally yielded this point in the same year. The church at Sabatisch did likewise in 1733. However, those who had been thus baptized were later upon the confession of their faith baptized by the pastors of the churches.

#### THE ABANDONMENT OF THE COMMUNITY OF GOODS AND ITS CAUSES

In the year 1686 the brotherhood at Levar decided to abandon another of the great distinctive practices of the Brotherhood, namely, the community of goods. Somewhat later similar action was taken by the other congregations. "Compelled by the greatest poverty," says the chronicler, "it was ordered that every one should pay for himself."

In the opinion of the chronicler, apparently, the cause of discarding the community of goods is to be found in the

indigence and poverty of the Brotherhood. Doubtless this was the immediate cause. However, in the course of their history the Brethren had repeatedly lost all their possessions and had been reduced to the bitterest poverty. The congregation which in 1531 moved from Austerlitz to Auspitz was well-nigh penniless. And in the persecution of the year 1535 the Brethren lost all their earthly possessions and suffered great need. Again in the persecution of 1548 and in later periods, in particular after their flight from Transylvania to Wallachia great poverty prevailed.

The contemporary writings of the Brethren show clearly that the abandonment of the community of goods had its primary cause in the inner, religious decline of the Brotherhood rather than in material need. The spirit of Christian love and true brotherhood had departed from the communities, as was pointed out above. In consequence, the practice of community of goods became more and more burdensome and finally impossible. The writings of the Brethren of that period are filled with complaints about the un-Christlike spirit which was manifesting itself within the Brotherhood in various ways. In addition to the pertinent quotations already given, the following citations shed further light on the situation.

On the text Acts 2:47 ("They did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God") a minister of the Brethren in this period said in a sermon:

Christ the Lord and the beloved prophets, apostles and other disciples did not thus cry for wine and meat as is done today by some of the would-be pious. For as the wolf who is shrieking "lamb, lamb," even so some of them cry, "wine, wine," "meat, meat." If they do not get it, the condition of their hearts is revealed by their words. They say, "I shall work according to the food I am given." The first Christians on the contrary ate their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God. They

were satisfied with that which one was able to give. They behaved as children of God, not as gluttons.

Another sermon from the same period, which treats of "the false brothers and step-sisters," contains these sentences:

We could mention by name many, indeed very many, who admire this verse (Psalm 127:2, Luther's translation, "he giveth it to his beloved in their sleep"), and use it as an excuse for laziness and for serving their belly. Yea, they use such scriptures for an excuse to let their neighbor work beyond his strength. Thus they cause a wasting of the marrow of his bones. It is a great shame, said a preacher in the Bruderhof at Kesselsdorf in 1655, if a member of the church of the Lord is truthfully accused of being frightfully lazy (*stinkfaul*), doing scarcely as much work as a child would do, but being a hero or heroine when it comes to eating, drinking, sleeping, and unnecessary expenditures. It is an abomination before God and all honest men and it will be followed by evil consequences.

It is very true, says another Hutterian preacher of that period, that this excellent practice of community of goods has brought forth many lazy people. Not a few of them have a way to make one believe that they are not able to work. They will hide themselves among the devout souls who through sickness and feebleness are disabled. And, what is worse, when they do some work, it is for their own benefit. In their supposed illness they become sleek and fat. It is, verily, not right before God and all men. And this is indeed the reason that the poverty of the Brotherhood increases as it does, and no one will admit that he is guilty. Often, alas, the complaint is heard that while in former times all were intent upon doing good work, this is not now true, but instead there is laziness and listlessness. Many lounge about to pass the time. In short, there is no diligence nor conscientiousness such as there was formerly.

It may be reasonably supposed that the abandonment of community of goods resulted in the elimination of some of the false brethren who had lived off the bitter sweat of the good people who for a long period had been the staff and stay of the community life against the greatest odds. At any rate, the great persecutions of the following century showed that many members of the Brotherhood were ready to suffer and die for their faith.

Preceding the account of the final destruction of the Brotherhood through a merciless persecution, one of the chroniclers relates the following:

Thus we have recounted briefly and yet truthfully and accurately the origin of the Brotherhood in Moravia and how, through much severe tribulation, it grew, developed, and spread; how they endured severe persecution for the sake of the faith, and finally, how, on account of their belief in the truth of God, they were driven out of the entire land of Moravia, almost with empty hands, whereupon they fled into Hungary where they with great difficulty maintained themselves and passed through much misfortune and calamity, especially in the Turkish and Tartar wars. Further, we have described how this worthy Brotherhood began to decline in all Christian virtues, and to decrease in numbers. Through many unfaithful men deterioration and corruption showed itself in the Brotherhood which the faithful, loyal brethren and elders were not able to overcome.

Now, since the descendants of the Hutterian Brotherhood had lost their first love and their pristine purity and rectitude, and had in many respects fallen away and not walked faithfully in the light of the Gospel, God finally withdrew from them his light and grace and permitted deep darkness to come upon them. As time went on, they fell away farther and farther, going from one error into another, until finally they even lost their name and had to accept the papal religion, as we shall now briefly relate.



## THE GREAT PERSECUTION IN HUNGARY

The chronicler Johannes Waldner gives the following vivid description of the last great persecution of the Brethren in Hungary, writing about three decades after these things had passed into history.

In the year 1759, when Maria Theresa was Empress, the clergy, especially the Jesuits and their ilk, petitioned the Empress for permission to attack the Brotherhood, which they still accused of being an Anabaptist sect, and to compel it to accept the Roman Catholic faith.

Now, the Empress Maria Theresa was an arch-Catholic and a great friend of the clergy. She favored them very much and could not easily refuse them anything. Wherefore the Jesuits readily received full authority to deal with the Brotherhood in Hungary according to their pleasure.

Now when they had been granted this authority, the Roman clergy secured the help of the civil government, especially that of the lords at Sabatisch, and other lords of the land, since they all wanted to secure favor with the Empress. For this reason they all willingly assisted.

There was a great gathering of officials for counsel which included the Jesuits who had the work in charge, the clergy of Sabatisch, Levar and Trentschin, and the magistrates. These all took counsel how they might most effectively accomplish their purpose. They decided that it was best to attack all the congregations at all four places on the same day without warning, and seize the books of the Brotherhood. This they determined to do on the 25th of November.

However, one of the magistrates, out of sympathy and pity for the congregation at Trentschin, revealed to them the plot. The brethren immediately sent messengers and informed the other congregations so that they could hide the books.

When the appointed day arrived, the Jesuits, together with the magistrates, with footmen, horsemen, and other attendants, attacked all four places at the same time with great display of force and wantonness, and set guards before the doors of the houses so that no one could go in or out. Thereupon all the men were called together and made to listen to a strict imperial mandate which, among other things, contained the following: It was the earnest will and command of Her Imperial Majesty that, since the books of the Anabaptist sect teach open heresy and damnable errors, they should be collected and destroyed, and whoever should refuse to deliver up such books would soon find how he would be dealt with.

The brethren were not frightened by this sharp threat, but replied to the authorities that they could not do this, and would never do it, for to them this would be the same as surrendering their faith. However, if the authorities wished to use force, they would not resist. Thereupon those in command ordered the books to be taken by force. The godless crowd then hunted through all the corners and secret places. They took as many books as they could find, and put them in chests which they sealed and took with them. Although the best of the books had been successfully hidden, yet many were found and taken away, for there were a very large number of books, as would be expected when one thinks how large the Brotherhood had been before.

One's heart aches when one thinks how many fine writings and books were lost in the plundering and destruction of the Brotherhood, books which had been collected and written with so much care and labor by the old brethren for the good and edification of the coming generations, and how they now came to such an end in that godless crowd where they were burned and devoted to various dishonorable purposes. [Much of the material confiscated by the authorities was preserved in Hungarian and

Czechoslovakian archives and libraries and used by Beck, Loserth, Friedmann, and others.]

After this, the enemies were quiet through the entire winter until Joseph's day (19th of March) of the following year, 1760. At this date the magistrates came again to Sabatisch. It was Count Nyari [who was one of the landlords of the Brethren] with his men. They fell upon the Brotherhood unawares as they had gathered one evening in the meeting house. It was a terrible night. They came with horse and wagon, with horsemen, footmen and other retainers, with drawn swords, rioting and raging furiously as if they meant to destroy everything. The people were frightened and one sister swooned away and died. The godless crowd cursed and swore and the congregation had to patiently bear it. Then each one was examined individually and each replied that he could not accept the Catholic faith.

Not long thereafter the authorities came again. The people were called together and a new imperial decree was read to them of the following content: It was the Empress' earnest command that the Anabaptist sect should not be tolerated in the land, but should at once be extirpated and destroyed. However, they would be tolerated and taken into imperial favor and protection if they would renounce their teaching on infant baptism, the Lord's supper, civil government, and the oath.

Thereupon the assembled brethren unitedly declared that they could not do this, and showed by the Holy Scriptures that the demands of the authorities on these points are contrary to the Word and truth of God.

Now when the enemies of the truth saw that the Brethren would not likely be moved, they began in earnest to use force. The magistrates came again with an imperial decree bringing a clever Jesuit with them. They called together the people to the meeting house, and announced that the Jesuit was appointed by the Empress as their

preacher, whom they should hear and obey and from whom they should receive instruction, while on the other hand the ministers of the Brotherhood were forbidden to teach and preach.

The Jesuit took his place in the pulpit and began to preach in the presence of the magistrates; the congregation had to stay and listen. The attendants stood beside the door and let no one pass out.

The Jesuit undertook to prove infant baptism as right on the basis of the Holy Scriptures. He began with a meek appearance; he wiped his eyes with a kerchief as though he were shedding tears, and said, "I cannot speak for pain of heart." He clapped his hands and said, "Almighty God have mercy on this poor folk who have been so shamefully misled. They will not accept the baptism which Christ and the Apostles have ordained, but practice another baptism which the devil and his cohorts have given them." And he added other infamous words.

Such a speech was so exasperating to the Brethren that one of them, by name Abraham Tschetterle, could not contain himself but interrupted the Jesuit in the presence of the entire meeting and the magistrates, and said, "Oh you miserable blind man. It is a great pity that you are so perverted. The baptism which Christ ordained and commanded, and which the Apostles used, this you say is of the devil; and the baptism which the Romish Pope or some church father established according to his own notions, this you consider as the Christian baptism, of which, however, not a single letter is to be found in the Holy Scriptures. Oh thou miserable man." Thereupon the magistrate commanded him to be quiet and threatened him with many things and wrote down his name. Soon he was seized and taken away about fifty miles to the town of Erlau where he was put into a Jesuit monastery.

Following this the authorities appointed two Jesuits as preachers for the brotherhood, one at Sabatisch and



one at Levar, and issued a strict order that whoever would not attend their teaching and preaching in the Catholic church should be brought to court under arrest. The meeting houses at Sabatisch and Levar were closed and sealed.

But regardless of the severity of the decree the people did not attend the Roman Catholic worship. This was reported to the authorities by the Jesuits.

### THE PERSECUTION BEGINS IN EARNEST

Again many clericals and lords gathered at Levar in the Bruderhof. Among them were the judge, magistrate, superintendent, and other officials, two deans, the pastors of Sabatisch, Levar, and other towns, with horsemen, etc., altogether a large company. All the brethren were summoned together and were sternly commanded to be obedient and attend only the Catholic church where they would hear the Jesuit's sermons. But the brethren utterly refused to consent to this, and there was much discussion and argument. The entire company remained all day long, eating and drinking, all at the expense of the Brotherhood so that altogether they consumed food to the amount of 80 Gulden, which amount the Brotherhood had to lay before the lords on the table that evening. This they repeated often. They did likewise at Sabatisch where almost the entire communal property was thus consumed. When finally the Brotherhood had no more money to give, the lords confiscated a piece of land and sold it to some nobleman for half price. By this process of plunder the Brotherhood fell into great poverty and need.

When the elder at Levar, Heinrich Müller, saw that the tribulation and suffering was increasing and that the enemies were really in earnest, he counselled with his people whether he should not take to flight so that the Brotherhood should not lose all its ministers, although he said

he did not want to desert his flock but was ready to remain and suffer gladly with them if he could only protect them from harm. He was ready to be satisfied with what the Brotherhood would decide. Thereupon they agreed that they would stay together and await with patience what God would permit to come upon them.

Somewhat later, the Jesuits were provided with soldiers by the authorities with whom they went from house to house, and drove the people by force into the churches, setting guards at the church doors so that no one could go out. If someone hesitated to go with them, he was beaten.

When these measures failed to bring the desired results, another company of these godless fellows came again to Levar and Sabatisch with footmen, horsemen and other soldiery, bringing many wagons and peasants with them. Nobody knew what was in store. The brotherhood was summoned. The authorities began to insist on their previous demands. But the brethren absolutely refused everything, since they knew that if they yielded to the order of attending the churches, other things would follow.

Then the authorities commanded the attendants to fall to. Scarcely had the command been given when the servants bound and threw onto the wagons the ministers and then most of the older brethren. They were taken in fetters to various prisons in the surrounding towns. This happened in the year 1761 on the Saturday before Easter.

Brother Zacharias Walter, Elder at Sabatisch, was imprisoned in the Jesuit monastery at Ofen, Brother Heinrich Müller in the monastery at Gran in Upper Hungary, Tobias Pulman of Sabatisch at Komorn, Heinrich Kühn, of the same place, at Raab, and Heinrich Pulman, of Levar, in Tyrnau.<sup>87</sup>

---

87. Cf. *Beck, Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 590f.

## THE BROTHERHOOD IN FLIGHT

The remaining Brethren who had not been carried away as prisoners, now took to flight, and wandered about the entire summer and winter in misery in the forests, suffering great need. Their wives and children were left at home in the houses, but they were occasionally able to steal back to them at night and secure some nourishment. None of the brethren dared to let himself be seen by day. Every workshop was deserted, and the entire economic system went to pieces. No one could escape over the borders of the country, for all roads were guarded and refugees were caught and returned. Upon being caught they were taken to the authorities, and if they refused to promise to attend the Catholic services, they were thrown into prison. So they had to be prepared for nothing but suffering and tribulation.

The brethren at Sabatisch fled to Levar since there were large forests in that vicinity. But they could not keep hidden long, for they were sought out by hunters and reported to the authorities. In the cold season they could not get along without fire, and then by the smoke their hiding places in the forest were betrayed.

So finally, the officials and hunters and horsemen, together with many peasants, surrounded the forest, and caught at one time over fifty brethren, some of whom were severely beaten. All had their hands bound behind their backs and were thrown upon wagons and sleds. The brethren addressed the officials in all meekness suggesting that they should consider what they were doing in their harsh and tyrannical treatment of them, whereas the greatest scoundrels and rascals were permitted to live unmolested in the villages and towns, while they, who would not do any one the least harm, had no place of refuge, not even with the wild beasts in the forest. The brethren had always led a law-abiding life and had faithfully paid

the Empress and her officers the required tithes, taxes, and rents.

To this the officials replied: "We well know that we have no better folk than you on our estates. But since the Empress does not wish to tolerate you, we do not care to lose her favor on your account." And so they bound them and carried them off to prison. They searched the brethren and took away from them all that was found on them. Even the ropes with which they were bound were bought at the expense of the Brotherhood.

Several days before this took place three brethren had been sent across the border into Austria to buy bread. As they were returning, they heard from afar the tumult as their brethren who had been arrested, were bound and severely beaten by the enemies. Thereupon they were sore dismayed, wept bitterly and cried to God in heaven on behalf of the great suffering.

They met two brethren who had escaped when the rest of them were being captured in the woods. With these they counselled and concluded to return to Sabatisch. So they went thither through the forest, since they dared not show themselves by day on the roads. Finally they reached their wives and children at Sabatisch, to whom they related that many brethren had been arrested and imprisoned. Those who had remained at Sabatisch also told of their suffering and misery, for but few of the men were there, since most of them had been imprisoned. The lords of Sabatisch had confiscated all their bed linen and other household goods. After this the sisters and children had moved together into a few houses and abandoned the rest.

Then the lords quartered 12 footmen and 2 officers upon them, who consumed the communal goods at Sabatisch and caroused outrageously. More than that, the lords required that the brotherhood should pay each officer a gulden a day in addition to furnishing hay and oats for the horses.



The arrested brethren mentioned above were returned each to his own locality, some to Sabatisch and some to Levar, where they were put into prisons in which they had to endure much cold and frost. Some of them had to hang in the stocks by one hand and one foot, after which they were not able either to sit or to lie, much less to stand. They also had to endure much hunger and need.

#### A NUMBER OF BRETHREN MARTYRED

After they had lain in prison for nine weeks and the authorities saw that they had accomplished no change in the attitude of the brethren, they began to use more severe measures, and decided to subject them to beatings to force them to renounce their faith.

The magistrates came to the brethren in the prisons and announced to them the decisions of the authorities, namely that they would be tied down one after the other, and severely beaten every day until they should be ready to promise to turn Catholic. This they announced with a strong oath.

At once the work was begun. Several brethren were taken from the prison and led before the Count in his castle. The first one who was laid down and beaten endured twenty-five strokes bravely and did not yield at all. He was thrown back into prison with the assurance that he would be beaten again on the morrow. The second one was laid down and endured seven or eight strokes, but then yielded and promised to turn Catholic. When they came to the third and were about to beat him, he said, "Shall I let myself be beaten for a long time and then after all be compelled to turn Catholic in the end? I will rather do it without beating, etc."

Similar terrible punishments were carried out at Sabatisch. One by name Hans Schmid was beaten inhumanly and left in such a miserable condition that they had to carry him away in a linen cloth since the flesh fell away

from his feet and legs.<sup>88</sup> Some of the brethren were so brutally beaten that they were crippled and ruined for life, and many never recovered, but died shortly thereafter.

Some of these poor unfortunate men bemoaned pitifully in the hour of death their apostasy and denial of the divine truth, and said, if they had only executed them with the sword or in some other way, they could have met death with joy, but the horrible beatings they could not endure. Yea, they wished that the godless had only not ceased beating until they were dead, so that they might have attained a blessed end. But now they had suffered so much and had no comfort.

By this inhuman treatment the rest were frightened, and discouraged one another, since they saw that no one was able to endure it; and God seemed to have withdrawn his support from them.

So with the rest not many strokes were necessary, and one after the other denied the truth, and turned Catholic, and was released from prison.

Thereupon, when the others, who had been able to escape and were scattered abroad here and there, heard of this, they also lost heart and came forth, one after the other, and fell away just as in autumn the foliage falls from the trees when the time is ripe.

When the members of the church had all fallen away, there still remained the ministers who lay in prison in the monasteries. These prospered after the flesh since they were given fine food and drink, and came home sleek and fat after the others had all fallen away.

So all the brethren in Hungary fell away from the faith, and not one remained faithful except Brother Heinrich Müller, Elder at Levar, who was a prisoner at Gran in Upper Hungary. But he was soon put out of the way. It is reliably reported of him that one evening he

---

88. Three rods "were broken on him." (Beck, *Geschichtsbücher*, p. 616.)

was having a hot disputation with the priests about the sacrament concerning which the latter claimed, according to their fleshly notions, that it is literally the corporal body and blood of Christ. He of course did not admit this and quoted among other Scriptures the words of Christ in Matthew 15:17: "What goes into the mouth, enters the stomach," etc., and said further: "See to what a wonderful end your Christ comes." The priests took great offense at this and charged him with great blasphemy. That night he was killed and carried out to the Danube in the early morning and buried. God knows how they treated him and what sort of death he suffered. It is supposed that he was poisoned.

A lady of the nobility, some years after this, remarked in a conversation with the wife of one of the apostate brethren who had been a nurse in her home, that they had been altogether too kind to Heinrich Müller; they should have cut his tongue from his throat for his evil words.

After this they all had to curse their former faith in the churches and swear an oath to remain true to the Catholic faith until death. But with what inner attitude many a one did this may well be surmised.

#### THE JESUIT DELPINI AMONG THE BRETHREN AT ALWINTZ IN TRANSYLVANIA

In the year 1762 persecution came likewise upon the brotherhood in Alwintz in Transylvania. For before the enemies of the truth had completed their work at Sabatisch and Levar in Hungary, the leader of the Jesuits who was directing the entire undertaking, by name Delpini, went to the Empress at Vienna and reported that the Anabaptist sect in Hungary had now been entirely exterminated and brought back into the fold of Catholicism, and what remained to be done would be properly taken care of by his assistants. However, he reported, there were

still some of these people at Alwintz in Transylvania, whither he would be ready to proceed and convert them to the Christian faith, if it were Her Majesty's wish. Whereupon he received full powers and authority to carry out his plans. At once he wrote in the imperial name to the governor at Hermannstadt (the capital of Transylvania) by whom the matter was promptly taken up.

After some time the Jesuit Delpini came to the home of the Elder in Alwintz and had him announce that all the people must attend his preaching. So the people assembled in the meeting-house, and the Elder and his assistants permitted the Jesuit to preach. The latter took his place in the pulpit, while the ministers sat beside him on the bench and listened, together with the congregation, to what this false prophet would bring forth.

The Jesuit took a text from the Gospel of John, Chapter 16, and dwelt especially on the verse where Christ said to his disciples, "I have yet much to say unto you, but ye are not able to bear it now." This he applied to the Brotherhood saying that they did not understand the Gospel sufficiently. Then he went on further with the words of Christ where he said, "But when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth"; this he applied to himself. He told them that he was going to teach them the first elements of the faith. Further he praised the Catholic faith, and told many stories of miracles and wonders performed by saints, especially one about a Jesuit, such as he, who had removed a mountain. He continued in many words which were given him by the spirit of error. When he was finished he stepped down from the pulpit and asked the congregation how they liked his sermon.

Thereupon Brother Joseph Kuhr arose, stepped to the pulpit and said to the Jesuit: "What you repeated from the Gospel, that I know as well as you; and what you said about your many saints, that I do not believe.



And what you said further about a Jesuit who removed a mountain is a Jesuit lie. For Christ did not mean the natural mountains, and the apostles did not remove the natural mountains; the mountains have remained where God put them in the beginning. But Christ meant the mighty ones and authorities of this world, who often stand like mountains in the way of the pious, through whose faith they shall be removed."

The Jesuit would not grant that he was wrong, and defended his teaching as best he could, and especially insisted that infant baptism was the true Christian baptism. But the above-named brother would not give him ground and resisted him with the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, yielding nothing.

After they had disputed for some time, Brother Joseph said to the Jesuit, "I hope by the grace and help of God that you will not succeed in making me a Roman Catholic, and from this day I shall no longer attend your preaching." Then he turned and addressed the entire congregation, saying, "Whoever counts himself a brother or sister in the church, let him testify to his faith and follow me." With these words he left the building. But not a single person followed him; even his own son remained seated with the others. From this one can see clearly their utter lack of courage. Neither the Elder nor any other brother had interrupted the Jesuit with so much as a single word; all had remained silent.

Some time later the Jesuit met brother Joseph on the street and shook his finger in his face threatening him, "Just wait, I'll teach you." The brother replied, "What will you teach me? You are not able to do more to me than God will permit."

The Jesuit soon saw that he could do nothing with him, and also that he would only urge the others to take courage and be steadfast, which the brother indeed did. Once, when they were gathered for a meeting, he pled ear-

nestly with the brethren with uplifted hands, to be strong in the faith and the truth. For such reasons the Jesuit found it desirable to get him out of the way as soon as possible. On April 8, 1764, Brother Joseph was arrested at the instigation of the Jesuit and imprisoned at Klausenburg and later at Hermanstadt.

The former Elder Mertl Roth was heard to express himself in the following manner: "We will not be able to maintain our position anyway, and even after long resistance will finally have to become Catholic. God can easily bring it about that, by means of a war, we shall come under another government and then we may return to our faith again."

When those who had yet a zeal for the truth saw what was about to happen, and that everything was turning toward apostasy and ruin, and even among the leading brethren no courage could be detected, and that they themselves were too weak to be steadfast at this place, several decided to flee from Alwintz and go to Creutz, which was about seventy-two miles from Alwintz, in the district of Hermannstadt. This was finally carried out and about twenty persons took to flight. But they had not proceeded far from Alwintz when they were arrested and imprisoned in the Castle. However, one, Jacob Stutz, escaped and reached the Brotherhood at Creutz, where he related what had happened to the others. (On the brotherhof at Creutz see page 100 ff.)

#### THE FURTHER COURSE OF THE PERSECUTION

After this, Delpini kept imprisoned in the Castle for about three weeks those who had been caught and arrested in their flight from Alwintz to Creutz. There they prayed, read, sang, and comforted one another in their tribulation with the Word of God. Then Delpini took the two oldest brethren, Johannes Stahl and Michael Wipf, out of the Castle and sent them as prisoners to Engeten,

where they were put into a nasty, miserable dungeon, where all who were imprisoned soon became ill and many died. And so fared Brother Michael who soon became severely ill and on account of this was released at the beginning of the year 1766. The others were also released except Joseph Weber. He was a native of Bohemia and had but recently come to Alwintz and joined the Brotherhood. Delpini had him put in irons in the castle and told the others that he would not release him until he should become a Catholic as he had been before.

The steadfast brethren and sisters in Alwintz held together and met for prayer in the house of brother Michael Wipf. Although Delpini prohibited this and strictly commanded them to remain in their own houses and discontinue their meetings they did not heed his orders.

So at this time there were three divisions in the Alwintz congregation: One faction had become Catholic, another faction held to the congregation at Creutz, while the third faction would not become Catholic and yet did not hold to the congregation at Creutz.

With the help of brother Peter Miller of Creutz, a number of the brethren succeeded in escaping from Alwintz and reaching Creutz.

But they had scarcely been three months at Creutz, when the impious Delpini wrote to the governor of Hermannstadt to send them back to Alwintz. And since Delpini had been authorized by the Empress, no one dared to resist him, but rather diligently carried out his orders. So the brethren were taken back to Alwintz by force.

As before, they continued to meet at Michael Wipf's house, where they read, sang, prayed, and strengthened one another as best they could in their time of tribulation. At this time brother Jacob Stutz was most outstanding among them. He was well-versed in the Holy Scriptures, and in many other respects a very able man, although later he also gave way.

The Jesuit wanted to arrest him but he was able to avoid him and hide himself. Later he was caught and kept in prison until he made the desired recantation.

Likewise the other constant brethren could not remain at Alwintz, and again made their escape to Creutz. And since the brethren at Creutz saw that they were knit with love to the Brotherhood and earnestly desired to save their souls, although they were too weak to endure loyally at Alwintz, they could not withhold their aid but helped them as much as possible.

Now it is true that a number of the church in Alwintz had already fallen away, as mentioned above, yet the majority had not yet become Catholic. The priest, becoming impatient, threatened to quarter soldiers in the homes of those who still resisted his demands. Mertl Roth held him off, however, and told him to have patience, that he would be able to accomplish everything with the people by good words, so that no soldiers would be necessary.

But the Jesuit began nevertheless to use force in earnest. He was given soldiers by the authorities, a corporal and four or five privates, whom he quartered in the houses, and to whom the people had to furnish food and drink. And when the Sundays and holidays came they drove them with force and blows to the Catholic Church. This continued for about a half year or more.

Again the Jesuit wrote to the governor at Hermannstadt that he should send back the people who had fled from Alwintz to Creutz. His desires were again carried out. They were returned by force. In consequence of the oppression more and more of the people fell away to Catholicism.

Since he had already won so many, the Jesuit now attacked the rest so much the harder. The soldiers dealt tyrannically and unmercifully with them. The poor women were handled cruelly, especially Anna Wipf, and Ju-



dith Stahl. As a result of this inhuman treatment all were frightened, and fell away from the faith, so that of the entire congregation at Alwintz, only three were left who did not promise to become Catholic. And these three were Joseph Kuhr, Johannes Stahl, and Lorenz Tschetterle, all of whom were not at Alwintz at that time.

But the Lord who knoweth the hearts, saw that these brethren and sisters had faltered and fallen out of great weakness. And since they were of a sincere and pure heart, he helped them to rise again. For the hand of God was upon them, and their own heart and conscience troubled them because they had denied God and his truth out of fear of men. For this reason, as soon as they had opportunity, they did not remain in Alwintz but fled again to the brotherhood at Creutz.

And since they bewailed their weakness, and humbled themselves, confessing their sin before God and the brotherhood, and pled for forgiveness and pledged themselves to suffer evil and good with the Brotherhood by God's help, the Brotherhood had patience with them, and called on the name of the Lord in their behalf. So the church in Creutz received them again, both them and their children.

#### PERSECUTION AT CREUTZ

Now when the Jesuit saw that the Brotherhood at Creutz was such a hindrance to his work of conversion that he could not complete his program, he decided to go to Creutz and attack the congregation there with tyrannical persecution and force the Catholic faith on them. Accordingly he rode to Hermannstadt, where the governor gave him one of the privy councillors who went with him to Creutz. He also took the son of the apostate Mertl Roth with him. When they came to Creutz they first went to the magistrate. The privy councillor handed

him the order of the governor that they should support the Jesuit in all his endeavors and further his work.

The next day the Jesuit came personally with the privy councillor and the village magistrate to the Brudershof, accompanied by horsemen and villagers. The Jesuit preceded, the others followed. Then he searched all the rooms, closets, and garrets, and wherever he found one of the Alwintzers he pointed him out, whereupon the horsemen and magistrate seized him. When he had gathered them all together they were driven to the house of the magistrate by the horsemen, while the attendants saw to it that none escaped on the way.

Then the congregation was summoned to the Brudershof. The privy councillor from Hermannstadt said that he had a decree to deliver to the entire congregation. While everyone listened quietly he said, among other things, that it was the strict command of the Governor at Hermannstadt that in the morning at 10 o'clock all should come to hear this priest. The Jesuit added, "Tomorrow and the next day, and continually," and pointing to himself he said, "Yes, me, me, you must hear."

The brethren refused briefly and crisply, and said they would not take a step to please this false prophet, still less would they listen to his false teaching, for they well knew the cleverness and treachery of the papal church together with its false teaching. They thanked God that he had delivered them and led them out from such darkness and miserable error. Therefore the Jesuit need not suppose that they would follow him or accept the papal religion. They had decided by the help of God, to suffer everything, yea, death, rather than to return to such error and false faith.

Much more was said than is written here, since each brother testified to the truth boldly to their faces, and even some of the sisters did not remain silent. The Jesuit walked back and forth, scowling, and knew of nothing

else to say than this: "Wait, just wait, I shall show you." And with that he with his company withdrew.

He saw at once that he would not be able to accomplish anything with ease, wherefore he did not remain there long but rode away at once to Hermannstadt, where he commanded the authorities to seize Johannes Stahl, and described his form and appearance—they would find him as a man of 50 years, small in body, swarthy and with curly hair. [Johannes Stahl was soon thereafter seized and imprisoned.]

After this, these poor brethren of Alwintz with their children were taken back to Alwintz two or three times more. For, although Delpini took the poor children at once to his house, clothed and provided for them (for they had come into a pitiful condition in these troublous times), and also had them baptized in the Catholic faith, the brethren and sisters of Alwintz would not stay there, but fled to the brotherhood at Creutz as soon as they could escape. When the brotherhood at Creutz fled from Transylvania to Wallachia in 1767, they went with them. But of this more will be related later.

#### GOOD COUNSEL FROM AN APOSTATE

The two brethren Johannes Stahl and Lorenz Tschetterle lay in prison in the castle at Alwintz until the month of October. The Jesuit had not the power to use such barbaric methods of conversion in Transylvania as he had employed in Hungary. When he saw that the imprisoned brethren could not be moved but rather clung close to their faith, he sent both to Klausenburg with the intention of having them banished from the land together with Joseph Kuhr.

When the two brethren were being led away, the apostate brother Jacob Stutz came to them and walked with them a short distance on the way, comforting them and telling them to be faithful, for, said he, when one

falls away and denies the truth he has no peace in his soul but constantly has the gnawing worm of an accusing conscience, just as he was now experiencing. Hence they should be strong; the Lord would support them and give them strength.

Although these comforting words came from an apostate, it was nevertheless a very welcome encouragement for the brethren, who were in great distress and sorrow after the flesh. One might well imagine their state of mind, especially that of Johannes Stahl who had to leave his wife and four children, not knowing whether he should ever see them again. But, though they were forsaken by all men, God strengthened them so that they did not despair nor lose heart in all their tribulation.

Thus has been told the story, briefly but accurately and thoroughly, of the decline and end of the brotherhood at Alwintz in Transylvania, how it was totally destroyed and rooted out, for, as related above, the great majority became Catholic. The brethren Joseph and Johannes were banished on pain of death. A small number, by the providence of God, escaped with the brotherhood at Creutz out of the land, namely sixteen persons, and three persons came from Transylvania to the brotherhood in Russia in the year 1782.



## CHAPTER V

### THE RENEWAL OF THE BROTHERHOOD AND FLIGHT TO WALLACHIA

In the year 1752 there began in the Catholic Archduchy of Carinthia in Austria a religious awakening, due to the spread of the writings of Martin Luther, Johann Arndt, Joseph Schaidberger, and others. Within a few years a large number of people decided to forsake the Roman Catholic Church and accept the Lutheran creed. They were imprisoned and threatened with severer punishment. Those who remained true to their convictions were deported to Transylvania, being compelled to leave behind all their possessions. Transylvania, although likewise under the Austrian Crown, tolerated the Lutheran Confession. Two hundred and seventy persons were forcibly deported to that province. Upon their arrival there they were required by the authorities to swear allegiance to the Empress Maria Theresa, so "that she might be assured of their further loyalty," whereupon they were promised that "she will be further gracious to you and permit you to build at her own expense your homes, and will give you in addition lands, pastures and other necessities."

Now, some of the refugees were apparently of the opinion that the refusal of the Empress to let them dispose of their property before their deportation was unjust. And they evidently failed to see a good reason for swearing allegiance anew seeing that they had always been loyal subjects. Besides, one of their number, Matthias Hofer, found in the Sermon on the Mount the words of Christ regarding non-swearing of oaths. So a number of them refused to swear,

although they still held to the Augsburg Confession of the Lutheran Church.

The Lutheran Church in Transylvania did not measure up to their conceptions of a true Christian church. They were especially displeased with the lack of discipline, in consequence of which open, grievous sinners were not excluded from the church. Although they were seriously disappointed in these respects, they continued to attend the Lutheran Church during the first winter, and had their children baptized in this faith.

Since they had not sworn the required oath of allegiance, they failed to receive any land, and because of this were compelled to earn a living by the work of their hands as day-laborers. Two of them, Andreas Wurz and George Waldner (the father of the chronicler) found work at Alwintz, where they became acquainted with the Hutterian Brotherhood. The church at Alwintz, it is true, had departed from the faith of the Hutterian Brotherhood, but these men, after they had become interested, obtained some of the old writings of the Church and, with some of their friends, read them with increasing interest and approval. Instead of further attending the Lutheran Church, they began to meet separately for Bible study and worship. At this time a persecution set in to force them to identify themselves with one of the recognized churches of Transylvania. They were scattered by the police throughout various districts, so that they could no longer meet for worship. Several, among them Matthias Hofer, were imprisoned. However, the man who was the moving force behind this persecution died within ten days after the beginning of the effort to scatter them.

One of the exiles, Hans Kleinsasser, had settled in the village of Creutz. In the year 1761 several other families moved to this village with the knowledge and consent of the magistrate. The villagers also welcomed the newcomers since they had done faithful work for them as day laborers. Other families came and in the following year a Hutterian

congregation was established by these Carinthian exiles, according to the old order and discipline of the Hutterian Brotherhood. Hans Kleinsasser, who had been ordained by the laying on of hands by the elders at Alwintz (Martin Roth and Joseph Kuhr) was chosen elder, Joseph Müller as steward of temporal needs, and George Waldner as schoolmaster. Friends from other localities also moved to Creutz and joined the new congregation. A number of persons came from the congregation at Alwintz, especially several widows and children. They were taken back to Alwintz several times by force as a result of the machinations of the Jesuit Delpini, but each time returned to the congregation at Creutz, as we have seen.

Every day, says the chronicler Johannes Waldner, the congregation assembled unitedly for prayer and the praise of God. If there was evil or wrong found among them, the guilty person was earnestly reproved. The Lord blessed his little flock with material goods also, although they were not able to cultivate or harvest anything, but earned their bread as laborers and by spinning and weaving.

On the 10th of August the Jesuit Delpini succeeded in having the congregation, which numbered 46 members, driven out with great tyranny and brutality, and scattered throughout the surrounding villages. But within eight days they were all back in Creutz. And now the Jesuit decided to adopt the same measures against them as had been used against the Brotherhood in Hungary and Alwintz. Johannes Waldner writes:

Truly it is not by the mercy of the wolves that sheep are allowed to live; likewise it was not in the power of the Jesuit to deal with the Lord's lambs according to the tyrannical purpose of his heart. For the Lord God frustrated his endeavors and did not permit them to succeed. The authorities in Hermannstadt (the capital of Transyl-

vania) did not wish to authorize such brutality without an imperial order. So the godless Delpini went to Vienna to the Empress. For this reason the undertaking was postponed until the next year. But after he had secured full authority and power to exterminate the Anabaptists he came again to Hermannstadt in August. And when he showed them his imperial authorization, the provincial authorities could no longer resist.

The same chronicler continues further:

At the same time in the providence of God the two dear exiled brethren Joseph Kuhr and Johannes Stahl came to us. Upon meeting them almost the first words of Brother Andreas Wurz were, "Well, Brother Joseph, have you come to lead us out of the land?" Brother Joseph answered, "Yes, my Brother Andreas, if it be the will of God." Then the two brethren related that in Moldavia and Wallachia (modern Roumania) there was plenty of room as well as freedom of religion, and that there the various Christian confessions were tolerated side by side; Greek Orthodox, Jews, and Armenians lived in the towns. No one was disturbed or persecuted on account of his faith. The land was subject to the Turkish Emperor.<sup>89</sup>

These two banished brethren had risked their lives to return and report to the Brotherhood that there was toleration in the provinces named. It was decided to flee to Wallachia without delay.

The Brotherhood existed in the village of Creutz for six years. They lived there in the simplicity of Christ according to the life and discipline of the apostolic church, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, and maintained community of temporal goods and separation from the world as

---

89. Flight into Turkish territory presented, humanly speaking, the only possibility for preserving the Hutterian Brotherhood at this time.



much as was possible. Excommunication was practiced against the transgressors and disobedient, and strict training of the children was maintained.

#### THE FLIGHT OF THE BROTHERHOOD FROM TRANSYLVANIA

On the third of October, 1767, at ten o'clock in the morning, the flight of the congregation took place. The magistrate of Creutz, having had a great deal of inconvenience on their account, laid nothing in their way. The brethren had secured two wagons, one with two pair of oxen, and one with two teams of horses, and on these the most essential things were loaded. The leave-taking was pitiful, for the brethren and sisters, and even the youth of 14 and 15 years, each took his staff in his hand, a bundle on his back. Many a one carried his infant child on top of his pack. The little children of four and five years had to go on foot. So they departed in the name of God. The well-built brotherhood house and much household equipment was left behind unsold.

We give again the words of Johannes Waldner who was a participant in the incidents recorded:

So we left Creutz, 67 souls [of whom 16 were from the old congregation at Alwintz], with heavy hearts at the thought of leaving behind the brethren and sisters who lay in prison at Repes and Hermannstadt, but the most of whom later succeeded in returning to the Brotherhood. No one asked us to halt, for the way was prepared by God.

The flight was carried out under the greatest difficulties. It was necessary to avoid attracting attention and for this reason a guide was necessary who would know every stick and stone of the way and could lead them over the least frequented roads.

Beyond Nussbach on the seventh day of the journey, the wagons had to be taken through two villages on the

main highway, but we feared that we would not be able to pass through with all the people. So the guide sent his assistant with the people a round-about way. He led them to one side of the villages over the mountain and through the valley until they again caught up with the wagons on the highway.

When we came to the Kronstadt heath, the guide would neither halt nor rest, but drove on without stop or stay, and our people and wagons did not dare to lag behind for the guide feared that he might be halted. So we hastened that we might pass Kronstadt before daybreak. Hard as the journey by day across Kronstadt heath was, the night journey was much more trying. That night many a one experienced what had seemed impossible to him before, namely that one can sleep and walk at the same time.

Through untold dangers which cannot be described here the Brotherhood, on the 10th of October, finally reached the high plateaus of the Carpathian mountain range which had to be crossed. Here they met a constable who told them he must report them to the authorities.

At this our anxiety and fear was increased many fold, since we expected nothing else but that we would now all be taken captive. But the elders admonished the people that they should not be so faint-hearted and despair at once of the help of God. If it should be his will, they said, that we be halted and imprisoned, we should, by the help of God, be ready to accept it in patience. Of what value was this vain apathy and complaining? This they said, and more. The same day the escort for which they had waited arrived and preparations were made to leave at once. But it was impossible to get over the mountains with the wagons, so the most necessary things were loaded on the four horses. The four oxen were driven across unloaded. The empty wagons were left behind until such a

time as the escort would have opportunity to bring them over the highway.

When everything was ready, just as the sun was setting, we started out again on the 13th of October. The escorts took us on untrodden ways through the underbrush and wilderness, where they knew that we were safe and without danger, for they knew all the secret ways and paths of the mountains. At many places we had to climb up on hands and feet. Everyone took care to follow closely so that he would not be left behind. At several places the loaded pack-horses were brought up only with great difficulty. So we struggled on during the entire night. Each one can best imagine for himself what a difficult and tedious journey that was, with bag and baggage and little ones on the back, to climb the high mountains, with young and old and weak ones, and that at night. The border was at the very top of the mountain.

Having crossed the border we were safe. We travelled slower a distance on the yonder side of the mountain until daybreak. Then we halted at the side of a brook and had a season of united prayer and thanksgiving. We praised the Lord that he had led us out of the power and hand of that false prophet and soul-murderer, and helped us all mercifully over the high mountains, without one of us being lost or harmed in any way.

The Jesuit Delpini had made arrangements to take our children from us and put them into an orphanage. This he had arranged with the Empress Maria Theresa. Everything had been prepared in Trenchment outside of Hermannstadt; even the beds for our children were in readiness. But God had brought his intentions to naught and had so planned and arranged that the snare which the enemy had laid for us was torn apart, and when he reached for us we had already fled the land. Praise be to God, who did not permit us to fall prey to their jaws. We have

escaped with our lives as a bird escapes the snare of the hunter; the snare is broken and we are free. Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 124:6-8.)

#### THE BROTHERHOOD IN WALLACHIA. MIGRATION TO RUSSIA.

The brotherhood settled at Tschoregirle (German Krähbach). Here, on account of the unhealthful location, they had to endure much from sickness. In the spring of 1769 the congregation moved to Paretschin a few hours distant. War had broken out between Russia and Turkey, and Wallachia was occupied by a Russian army. In these troublous times of war the Brotherhood was robbed of a large part of its moveable goods and clothing, not by the soldiery, but by plundering bands.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE HUTTERIAN BROTHERHOOD IN RUSSIA AND IN AMERICA

The Russian General Sametin, to whom the Brotherhood in Wallachia appealed in their need, manifested a friendly interest in them and advised them to emigrate to Russia. He gave them a wagon with a pair of oxen for the journey and supplied them with the necessary passport. On the 10th of April, 1770, they set out. In the province of Moldavia near the city of Hattin they met the Russian Field Marshal Count Romanzov and entered into a contract with him through which they received permission to settle on one of his manors at Wischenka, on the River Desna in the province Tscherinogov, not far from Gluchow in Northern Ukraine. Freedom of religion was guaranteed to them, and a loan for the establishment of a Bruderhof was promised. In addition the Count gave them money for the journey. On the 1st of August, 1770, they reached Wischenka. Here the Brotherhood soon attained to considerable prosperity. Industries such as pottery, weaving, and metal-working were highly developed.

In the year 1771, on July 20, we were again gathered together under one roof and at one table, and on the 24th of July the first preaching service was held in the newly built house. In the year 1778 the primary and advanced schools were built.<sup>90</sup>

---

90. A valuable description of Hutterian faith, life and practice, written by Johannes Waldner, in 1811, is reprinted in *Zeitschrift für Brüdergeschichte*, vol. IV, Herrnhut, 1910, p. 229 seq.

On the 21st of December, 1772, all the prisoners in Transylvania were released on command of the authorities. Matthias Hofer had lain in prison at Hermannstadt for 16 years. Several others had been imprisoned for five years. On the 26th of January, 1773, they arrived in Wischenka and were received with great joy by the Brotherhood. The returning prisoners brought the *Larger Brotherhood-Chronicle* with them, which, together with other books, they had been able to secure at Alwintz through the special providence of God.

#### CONNECTIONS OF THE BROTHERHOOD WITH THEIR FRIENDS IN HUNGARY AND CARINTHIA

In the year 1780 the news began to drift in through various persons who had come from Austria to Russia, that in the German Empire great changes were taking place since the Empress Maria Theresa had died and her son, Joseph II, was crowned Emperor. News came that the new Emperor had promised religious liberty to all faiths.

Thereupon it was decided to send two brethren to Levar and Sabatisch in Hungary, as well as to Carinthia. They visited the apostate brethren in Levar. To the latter it seemed unbelievable that a Hutterian Brotherhood still existed. From here the two traveled to Carinthia to visit their friends and relatives. "Here they were received with great joy but when their friends heard that they did not baptize the young children but only adults, it seemed altogether too remarkable and strange to them, for to this day the Anabaptists are greatly despised and hated and the common man in particular supposes that there are no more awful heretics in the world than they. For this reason their nearest and dearest friends withdrew from all fellowship with them."

The two brethren retraced their steps to Levar, but were at once expelled by a Jesuit. During their absence in Carinthia

great dissatisfaction with Catholicism had come to light in both Levar and Sabatisch. So the brethren did not dare to go to Sabatisch. But Jacob Walter at Sabatisch sent several books, two Hutterian coats, two pairs of breeches, and two pairs of Hutterian shoes to them at Pressburg, "that the Brotherhood in Russia and their children might see and know the manner of clothes which our forefathers had been accustomed to wearing". After this brethren were repeatedly sent from Wischenka to Hungary, but their efforts were fruitless.

In the summer of the year 1782 a letter came from Jacob Walter at Sabatisch, dated June 22, in which he reported that many in Sabatisch and Levar had again confessed their old faith. He pled with the brethren by the mercy of God to come to their aid and counsel as much as possible. Joseph Müller and Christian Hofer at once departed for Hungary but were able to accomplish nothing. Before they arrived at Levar and Sabatisch a persecution had set in. Those who had declared that they wished to embrace their old faith discovered that the Edict of Toleration of the Emperor included only the Papal, Lutheran, Calvinistic and Greek Orthodox religions. Emperor Joseph granted an audience to four men of Sabatisch who had been imprisoned, but refused to promise them toleration. Some time later (1783) Jacob Walter escaped to Russia. He traveled by way of Gnadenfrei where he was granted a pass by Count Zinzendorf. Within the next few years a total of about 55 persons escaped from Levar and Sabatisch to Russia. Many who had undertaken the flight to Russia were caught on the way and brought back.

#### AN AUDIENCE GRANTED BY THE EMPEROR

As just mentioned, the delegates of 1782, Joseph Müller and Christian Hofer, were not able to attain their purpose. In fact they did not get farther than Vienna. After lengthy counsel in Vienna they agreed that, since it was impossible

to accomplish anything with the people at Sabatisch, they would make an effort in behalf of the property and inheritance which they had left behind in their native land, Carinthia. For this they had the necessary documents with them. So they went to the Russian consulate where they announced their mission. The clerks in the consulate aided them in the preparation of a petition which the brethren handed to the Emperor Joseph.

The story of the chronicler follows:

As the brethren came again to the imperial palace to inquire about the matter, it happened that the Emperor was just descending from an upper room. He noticed brother Christian and called, "Come in." Christian went with him into a room, where they were alone together, and conversed for about a half hour. First the Emperor asked him what he wanted. The brother replied that he had sent him a petition and did not know whether it had reached him or not. The Emperor asked whence they came, whether they were not of those folk in Hungary. The brother replied that according to religion they were, but that they were natives of Carinthia, and were of the number who had been banished and forced to migrate to Transylvania in 1755. The Emperor replied, "I know, I know."

Brother Christian thereupon begged the Emperor most humbly concerning their property and inheritance which they had left behind them in Carinthia. The Emperor replied, "Come back to your fatherland to your house and home and you shall have everything again." The brother said, "They will not tolerate us but persecute us." The Emperor said with earnest words, "Who persecutes? Who persecutes? No one persecutes now."

Then the brother said, "Just this summer in Hungary six men lay more than a month in prison for their faith's sake." Then the Emperor was silent for a little while and



finally said, "Well, what of it? That is but a small thing. One must adopt some recognized religion, Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, or Greek." The brother replied, "We cannot be convinced in our heart of any teaching differing from that which Christ the Lord and his apostles themselves gave, namely that one should abide in the pure evangelical doctrine, and follow him, and live a pious Christian life."

Thereupon the Emperor asked many questions. What we are named. How it went with us in Transylvania. Whether we were allowed to have property in that country. Whether we had been given land. Whether the priest who had persecuted us in Transylvania was not named Delpini. How we fared in the persecution. How we came into Wallachia and where we lived there. Whether it was a good land. How we fared there. Why we had gone into Russia. Where we live at present. Whether the Count had given us enough land. Whether our houses were of stone or wood. Whether we had a priest and whether he was married.

All of these questions Brother Christian answered to his best knowledge, and the Emperor listened very attentively. Then Christian pleaded once more for the property which we had left in Carinthia. The Emperor did not reply with yes or no, but asked how we had been able to get out of Russia. When Brother Christian told him that we had secured a passport from our Count to visit our friends in Austria, he permitted him to leave. The Emperor accompanied him to the door.

Some years later word was received from Hermannstadt, that our property left behind in Carinthia, amounting to 2151 Gulden, had had to be sent in haste to Vienna, but what disposition was made of it, no one was able to discover. At least nothing of it ever came to the Brotherhood.

## A VISIT BY A MORAVIAN FROM GERMANY IN LEVAR

In the year 1783 the former Hutterian congregation in Levar was visited by a delegate from the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum) at Herrnhut in Saxony. The Moravian Church (descendants of the so-called Picards) had received word of the persecution of the Hutterites in Hungary through the refugee Jacob Walter who had passed through Herrnhut on his way to Wischenka, in 1783, whereupon the Directorate of this church in Saxony delegated the former schoolmaster Czolsch to visit the former Hutterites in Hungary who had been converted by the Jesuits.<sup>91</sup>

When he arrived at the Bruderhof at Levar he went to the pottery and was led, at his request, by the master potter, to the warehouse, where he wished to speak to him privately. Czolsch relates the story of his visit as follows:

When I was alone with him, I asked him whether he knew one by the name of Jacob Walter. He replied, "Why should I not know him? He is my brother in the flesh." I told him that I had learned to know Jacob in Saxony when he was fleeing to Russia. At that time his report of the sad condition in which he and they were living had affected me very much. He said that they now had peace, and all trouble was over since they had all become Catholic and promised under oath to remain Catholic, and to ever confess that they all had accepted this religion of their own free will and not by compulsion. I asked whether they would not have done better to adopt the Augsburg Confession of the Lutheran Church. He replied quite indifferently that it would go ill with him who would now suggest such a change.

---

91. At Levar and Sabatisch in modern Czechoslovakia the descendants of those who were forced to accept the Roman Catholic creed still live in some of the former Bruderhof buildings. They are known by the name "Habaner." Cf. Friedmann, R., *Die Habaner in der Slowakei*, Wien, 1927.

He said that I had risked a great deal to come to them under the present circumstances. They had mutually promised, if they suspected any one of non-Catholic proclivities, to disclose him to one another and report him, and I had great cause to beware that I should not come into misfortune in this place. If I should be discovered, I would be imprisoned and probably never be able to regain my liberty. I asked him whether they had been able to keep their religious books. Answer: No, they had handed them all over to the priests and had disclosed all the secret hiding places according to their promise. More than two wagon loads of books had been carted to Pressburg. Even in his own house there were a number of books hidden of which he knew nothing. These had also been discovered and turned over.

I asked him whether I would find conditions different in St. Johann or Sabatisch, or whether conditions were the same. Answer: Not different than here. By this time it was no longer quiet where we were; first one and then another came up and saw and listened to what was going on. He warned me again, as I left, of a threatening possible misfortune. I cannot describe how sad I felt to have found this folk in such a situation, and to have to leave them again without accomplishing anything.<sup>92</sup>

#### THE BROTHERHOOD IN REDITSCHAWA AND ON THE MOLOTSCHNA RIVER

The sons of Count Romanzov attempted to reduce the Brethren on his lands at Wischenka to serfdom but upon their petition the Czar Alexander I decreed by a ukase of May 22, 1801, that they might settle on crown land and enjoy all the rights and privileges that had been granted the Mennonites who had immigrated from Prussia. In the year 1802 therefore

---

92. *Zeitschrift für Brüdergeschichte*, vol. IV, Herrnhut, 1910, pp. 216-220.

they moved to Reditschawa on the Desna, 15 versts from Wischenka, after they had lived 32 years at the latter place. In the new home a primary and advanced school was built, also a preaching room and workshops. The industries included weaving, pottery, tailoring, shoemaking, turning, hatting, and tanning. In addition there was built a large water-mill as well as a wind-mill.

Here it became evident after a time that inner decay had set in. The enemy, says the chronicler, sowed tares among the wheat. In addition, disunity developed among the ministers. In the year 1819 the practice of community of goods was abandoned. The Brotherhood became poverty-stricken. "Ruin both spiritual and temporal threatened," says the chronicler. At the request of the Brotherhood, Johann Cornies, the leader among the German Mennonite Colonists in Russia, rendered them valuable assistance and helped them to secure good land on the Molotschna river. As a result, in the year 1842 the entire colony, 78 families, moved to the Molotschna and established the village of Huttertal. In the year 1853 a second village, Johannesruh, was founded. In 1857 two other villages were established in the same gouvernement, namely Hutterdorf, and Neu-Huttertal. Here the Brotherhood again attained a degree of prosperity. A sum of 15,000 rubles which had been loaned them by the Russian government was soon repaid.

In the year 1845 and some of the following years groups of the Hutterian Brethren petitioned the Russian government for permission to organize a Bruderhof, but without success. Johann Cornies advised the government against granting the petition. After his death, in the spring of 1853, thirty-three families of Huttertal made an attempt to re-establish community of goods, but failed. Elder Michael Waldner with a number of families set up a Bruderhof of the old order in 1859. Darius Walter in the following year established a Bruderhof. Thus there were two communistic colonies in the Molotschna country.



## THE BRETHREN IN AMERICA

The two colonies just mentioned, as well as all the other congregations of the Hutterian Brethren, immigrated to the United States of America in the years 1874 to 1879, the Russian government having withdrawn the grant of freedom from military and government service. They settled in the territory of Dakota, in what is now South Dakota. The first group, coming in 1874, comprised about 250 souls. Most of these decided upon the community life of the old order. They organized two Bruderhofs, known as the Bon Homme and Wolf Creek Colonies, not far from the Nebraska border. In 1877 seventeen additional families came, establishing a Bruderhof at Elm Spring. Another group came in 1879. On the whole it may be said that those who had practised community of goods in Russia, continued the same in Dakota and were joined by some of the others. About half of the Hutterian immigrants settled in Bruderhofs. As their numbers increased more land was secured and new Bruderhofs established, until the total number, in 1914, reached seventeen.

During the World War the Hutterian Brethren were subject to peculiarly vicious attacks by overzealous local patriotic officials for their firm maintenance of their four-century-old position on non-resistance. The only conscientious objectors to die as a result of persecution in the camps during the war were two young men from a Hutterian Bruderhof, Joseph and Michael Hofer.<sup>92a</sup> After the war all but three of the Bruderhofs migrated to Manitoba and Alberta, having been promised complete freedom from military service by the Canadian government.

About the middle of the year 1931 the total number of souls in the Hutterian Brotherhood of the original type,

---

92a. The story of the persecution of the Hutterites in the military camps during the war, and particularly the story of the death of the two martyrs is reported in *Die Hutterischen Brüder im Militär-Gefängnis*, by J. G. Ewert, and C. Henry Smith's *Coming of the Russian Mennonites*, pp. 277-282.

was 3,483. These were scattered over 33 Bruderhofs or colonies in western Canada and South Dakota. An approximately equal number of descendants of Hutterites have organized congregations in South Dakota, North Dakota and Saskatchewan, being known as Hutterian Mennonites. Some have united with other Mennonite groups.

There is no central organization for the 33 colonies. Each is governed by its own organization, and the various organizations may and do differ in minor practices and policies. In the fundamental ancestral principles however they maintain approximate uniformity.

A Bruderhof was organized in 1926 at Neuhof near Fulda, Germany, by Dr. Eberhard Arnold who, on December, 1930, was received into the Hutterian Brotherhood and appointed as a minister of the Word at the Stand-Off Bruderhof near Macleod in Alberta, Canada. The Bruderhof in Germany comprises about 75 souls.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FAITH AND PRINCIPLES OF THE HUTTERIAN BRETHREN

The following statement from the preface to Dr. Joseph Beck's work on the Hutterites, which has been repeatedly mentioned, characterizes the faith of the Hutterian Church.

They held to the twelve articles of the so-called Apostolic Creed. The Christian church was to them "the Pillar and ground of the truth", the light and lamp of righteousness (I Tim. 3:15). If asked further what they understood by the Christian church, they would answer, The community of all believers, gathered together by the Holy Spirit, separated from the world by the pure doctrine of Christ and united by divine love, bringing to the Lord spiritual sacrifices of the heart. He who would enter this church and become a member of the family of God must lead a godly life and conversation.

The communion of the saints, that is of the true members of the covenant of God, they confess to be holy, because through the blood of Christ and the washing of water by the Word (Eph. 5:26) and in the obedience of faith they are washed from their sins and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, having communion with God the Father and Son, constituting a divine unity which expresses itself not only in regard to holy things but also in the external fellowship.<sup>93</sup>

---

93. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 9.

A recent writer says concerning the doctrinal position of the present-day Hutterites:

One of the Hutterian Brethren was recently asked what he would name as the chief tenets of their faith, and he replied: "If I should answer the question just as you ask it, I should say, We believe in a personal God; that Jesus Christ was his only begotten Son; that he came into the world to save humanity through the shedding of his blood on the cross. In all these things we agree with most evangelical churches. But if you meant to ask what distinguishes us from other evangelical churches, I should say: We believe in community of goods, and have all our property in common; we believe in nonresistance; we do not take oaths; we do not take or hold public office; and we baptize only upon profession of faith."<sup>94</sup>

The most important work on the faith and practice of the Hutterian Brethren is their Confession of Faith and Discipline, entitled, *Rechenschaft unserer Religion, Lehre und Glaubens* (Account of our Religion, Doctrine, and Faith), written by Peter Riedemann, who was head pastor of the Hutterian Church from 1542 to 1556. This work, consisting of ninety-five articles, gives a thorough, comprehensive statement of Hutterian faith and practice. It is considered authoritative by the Hutterites of today.<sup>95</sup>

---

94. Clark, *The Hutterian Communities*, p. 364.

95. Riedemann was born at Hirschfeld, in Silesia, about 1506. He united with the Hutterian Brotherhood in 1529, in Upper Austria, and came to Moravia about 1532. In the course of his labors as an evangelist he was again and again imprisoned. Nine years he spent in prison at Gemünd in Upper Austria, in Nuremburg, and at Wolkersdorf in Hesse in 1540. The first edition of the *Rechenschaft* was published probably about 1545. A later edition has this statement: "Reprinted, 1565, by Philips Vollandt." A copy of this edition is in the library of the British Museum. In 1870 this work was printed in *Mittheilungen aus dem Antiquariat Calvary in Berlin*, I, 154-417. Among the Hutterian Brethren of our time this work existed before 1902 only in manuscript. The Brethren published a new edition in 1902, from a manuscript of the sixteenth century (in hand-printed characters). References given here are to this edition. Christoph



THE SCRIPTURES IN HUTTERIAN THEOLOGY<sup>96</sup>

During the times of intolerance and persecution the opponents of the Hutterian Brethren held that all the various Anabaptist sects constituted one party whose founders were the so-called Zwickau Prophets and Thomas Münzer, the Saxon enthusiast who was executed in 1525 as a leader of the rebellious peasants in the Peasants' War. Only recently a number of historical writers have asserted that all Anabaptists were virtually the spiritual children of Thomas Münzer.<sup>97</sup> Münzer taught that the Spirit, instead of Scripture, is the final religious authority, and that new revelations beside and above Scripture are needed. Thus he opened the way for radical individualism and fanaticism. He believed that the Holy Spirit works independently of Scripture and of the preaching of the Word, and that the spiritually enlightened Christian can dispense with the Bible. Such views have recently been again ascribed to the Hutterian Brethren. They have been declared to be virtually followers of Thomas Münzer.<sup>98</sup> That this view is utterly untenable, however, is evident from the Hutterian writings.

---

Andreas Fischer, in the preface to his *Widertaufer Taubenkobel* (1607) says that he had finished a comprehensive reply to this book which he hoped to have soon in print under the title, *Examen dess Hutterischen Widertauferischen Büchleins, Rechenschaft unserer Religion*, etc. No trace or allusion to such a book has yet been found.

96. The Hutterian Brethren believed that the relationship between the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament is the groundwork, the foreshadowing and promise of the New. Many of the Old Testament precepts were intended for pre-Messianic times alone. Certain points of Old Testament law were expressly abrogated by our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount.
97. This opinion was defended by Professor Karl Holl, of Berlin in his essay, *Luther und die Schwärmer*, published in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte*, I, zweite Auflage, Tübingen, 1923; and by Professor Heinrich Böhmer, of Leipzig, in *Thomas Müntzer und das jüngste Deutschland*, published in *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, von H. Böhmer, Gotha, 1927, pp. 187-222.
98. For example, by Dr. Lydia Müller in *Der Kommunismus der mährischen Wiedertäufer*, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 16, 74, 75. This writer makes the fol-

In Riedemann's *Rechenschaft* the indispensable need of hearing the Word is often emphasized. Riedemann says:

When the Word is heard and received in faith, the faith is sealed by the power of God, the Holy Spirit, who then regenerates and quickens the believer who had been dead in sin.—But this [saving] faith comes from hearing the preaching of the Gospel (Rom. 10:17). Therefore by diligently hearing and accepting the preaching of the Gospel we become partakers of the fellowship of Christ.—Through his Word God calls men to salvation<sup>99</sup> and through it he reveals himself and makes himself known.—As a man hears the Gospel of Christ and believes the same from the heart, he is sealed by the Holy Spirit, as Paul says, Eph. 1:13.<sup>100</sup>

In 1557 the assertion that, in the opinion of the Anabaptists the preached word is not necessary for obtaining the knowledge and grace of God was made in a booklet entitled,

---

lowing unfounded statement: In Hutterian theology "the rule of faith is not the Scriptures but the Spirit speaking in the innermost souls of the elect" (p. 27). A number of other unsupportable statements on this point are found in the same book. The author compares the views of the Brethren with those of Martin Luther but overlooks the fact that a number of passages are found in Luther's writings in which he seems to appeal to personal divine revelation. On pp. 24-27 of her book this author denounces as fanaticism certain views expressed by Hutterians which were nevertheless also set forth by Martin Luther in the following quotation: "It is needful to know that God's Word is treated (preached) in two different ways. First by those who do not truly believe but have accepted it only outwardly by the letter, according to reason. . . . The other way is when the Holy Spirit teaches it and it is then not accepted by human thought but God grants the true understanding and experience in the heart. The first will never have the true understanding and yet they may become great babblers who boast that they also have read it and understand it very well, and can set it forth much better than all others." (*Luthers Werke*, Weimar edition, vol. XII, p. 438).

99. The Hutterites as well as the Swiss Brethren taught the freedom of the will. They held that whether or not the will is surrendered to God depends on man's own decision. They did not accept the doctrine of predestination.

100. Riedemann's *Rechenschaft*, pp. 73, 36, 34, 56.

*Process wie es soll gehalten werden mit den Wiedertäufern*, (Judgment stating how Anabaptists should be dealt with).<sup>101</sup>

This *Judgment* was signed by Melanchthon (who was probably the author), Johannes Brenz and other Protestant theologians. An answer to this publication was written by a representative of the Hutterian Brethren<sup>102</sup> who says in reply to the above accusation:

We have no pleasure in replying to such shameful lying accusations but for the sake of the truth of God we dare not neglect to refute and make ashamed these tricky opponents of the truth.—We do not hold that God makes himself known without the hearing of the preached Word; this would be a detraction from and a disgrace to the predetermined order of God.—Therefore, (to speak with Paul, I Thess. 2:13), the Church of the Lord gives thanks to God without ceasing when it receives the divine word in preaching, and receives it not as the word of men, but

- 
101. Reprinted in *Urkunden zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer*, 1. Band, *Herzogtum Württemberg*, herausgegeben von Gustav Bossert, Leipzig, 1929, pp. 161-168. Cf. Hege, C., *Die Täufer in der Kurpfalz*, Frankfurt a. M., 1908, pp. 93-99. The booklet is a resume of what others had written on the subject. Following are a few quotations from it. "The Anabaptist sect is not a Christian church but a diabolical delusion." It is a "spectre of demons," "devilish vermin" (*ein teuflisch geschmeiss*) which should be exterminated "and put to death with the sword." In the face of the opinion so largely held by Protestant church historians that the Hutterites, together with all other Anabaptists, were fanatics, the question would seem to be in place whether the language just quoted is not an indication of fanaticism on the part of some of the theologians of state church Protestantism. It should be recalled that this *Judgment* was written and published twenty years after the sect of Münster had ceased to exist. The Anabaptists against whom it was written were Swiss Brethren (Mennonites) and Hutterites.
102. This reply is found in a number of copies in manuscript in the Hutterian colonies. To all appearances it was never issued in print. The title is, *Hand-Büchel wider den proces der zu Wurms am Rem wider die Brüder so man die Hutterischen nennt ausgangen . . . im 1557. Jahr. Dessen sich dann Philippus Melanchthon und Joannes Barentius [Brenz] selbst sammt andern mehr aus ihren mittel unterschrieben haben. Wehe aber denen, die das Böse gut und das Gut böss nennen, die Finsterniss zu Licht und das Licht zur Finsterniss machen. Esaie 5.*

as it is in truth, the word of God which effectually worketh a holy life in the believer.—For, dear Philip Melancthon and Johannes Brenz, we are not ignorant that it was within God's power to give the gift of the Holy Ghost to Paul and restore his sight without human instrumentality but he did not wish to encroach upon his divine order, and so Ananias was used as an agent and instrument of God in this case. Likewise God would have been able by His own might and power, without using Peter as an instrument, to bring to Cornelius and others a knowledge of divine truth apart from teaching and preaching. But God did not do this and it was necessary that Peter would travel from Joppa to the city of Caesarea to proclaim to them the word of life to which they harkened diligently and received the Holy Ghost and believed the preached word. Therefore Paul says: Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing through the preaching of the Word. And blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it (Luke 11:23). Therefore we account it necessary and blessed to put forth efforts toward preaching the Word among the nations.<sup>103</sup>

A weighty proof of the injustice of the charge that the Hutterites gave the Word a secondary place is found in the following incident, as recorded in the *Larger Church Chronicle*.

In the year 1645, in the month of June, the brother Benjamin Kengel in Sabatisch refused to attend the preaching services and the daily meetings for prayer. When asked the reason, his answer was that the righteous

---

103. *Hand-Büchel*, chapter 8. It may safely be said that no other Anabaptist group nor any of the Protestant state churches carried on organized mission work to the same extent as the Hutterites—an evidence of the importance they placed on the preached Word. Against Luther's opinion that infants are believers and should therefore be baptized (cf. Horsch, J., *Infant Baptism*, Scottdale, Pa., 1917, p. 41) the Brethren quoted Rom. 10:14: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Cf. *Rechenschaft*, p. 176.



had no need of instruction, the Holy Spirit was their teacher, and the common prayer was only a human custom not directed by the Spirit. Also, baptism was unnecessary, it was only a constraint and law through which people are brought under human obedience, contrary to the liberty of Christ. All preachers he held to be hirelings and their ministry contrary to God's design; he held that the Lord's supper and all outward ceremonies and regulations were not needed for the true Christian. In short, he believed that the Hutterian Church had never taken the right position but had always held an erroneous opinion. He persisted in his error although he was clearly shown that it was contrary to the teaching of Christ and the example of the first church in Jerusalem and at variance with the work of the Holy Spirit. He haughtily disregarded all faithful admonition and instruction and was consequently excluded and separated from the Church. Later he confessed freely before the Church that he had been in error and desired reinstatement.<sup>104</sup>

### SIN AND SALVATION

The opinion that the Hutterian Brethren denied original sin is incorrect. They taught that all descendants of Adam inherited a sinful nature, but that through redemption all infants are saved in spite of original sin. They disapproved of the doctrine that baptism (infant baptism) annuls the guilt of original sin. In other words, they attributed to the blood of Christ that was shed for all men what in Catholic theology is ascribed to the act of baptism.

"We confess," says a writer of the Hutterian Brethren, "that all men born into this world are, as the descendants of Adam, included and held under original sin, yea they are under condemnation to eternal death and destruction. But God who always has loved his creature and not hated it, has

---

104. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 630.

given his only begotten Son to be the reconciliation for the sins of the whole world."<sup>105</sup> "Original sin," says Peter Riedemann, "before the time that it shows its effect and leads into further sin, has no other penalty than natural death; it does not bring eternal death."<sup>106</sup>

In answer to the accusation of teaching that "we are righteous through our own fulfilling of the law," the Hutterian Brethren said:

Although many cry out against us that we seek to be saved through our own works, we deny the charge, for we know that all works, in so far as they are our own, are nothing but sin and unrighteousness (Rom. 14:7-9), but in so far as they are Christ's and Christ is doing them through us (John 15:5), they are in truth righteous and good, pleasing and acceptable to God.<sup>107</sup>

In the above mentioned booklet of the year 1557 they say further:

We do not say that man, by his own merit and fulfilling of the law, may be found righteous before God, for the law was only a means for the preservation of divine discipline in the time of [types and] shadows before the revelation of the faith in Christ Jesus, in whose name our transgressions are forgiven and our sins covered.—Therefore you must not suppose that the believers exalt good works above what is fitting. They do not exalt good works above measure or in a way that is contrary to divine truth, but believe that both to will and to do the good is not of man but of God himself who accomplishes it. Therefore the believer has daily need to pray almighty God fervently for grace to keep the law of faith and perform his God-appointed duties and obligations, and, notwithstanding all

---

105. *Hand-Büchel*, chapter 7.

106. *Rechenschaft*, p. 51.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

diligence and true devotion, to confess before God and men: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do. But this duty and piety which God requires of all men, people in general are inclined to avoid and to serve God only by a vain, fruitless faith, although Scripture clearly teaches that faith must be active through love.<sup>108</sup>

### THE NEED OF A CONSISTENT CHRISTIAN LIFE

While the need of living a consistent life was emphatically taught by the Hutterian Brethren, they did not teach that all propensity to sin is destroyed in the believer, or that sin may be eradicated and our nature become sinless. Nevertheless they believed that the regenerated, having been endowed with the Holy Spirit and having surrendered their lives to Christ, will not be the servants of sin but may have victory over it.

"Christ the Lord himself, says Peter Riedemann, does the work in us and takes away sin, of which he alone can set us free, and thus we through him are made free from sin to the extent that it may no longer, as formerly, rule over us, although it arises in our members (*ob sie sich wohl in unseren Gliedern erreget*); therefore he is our Redeemer in truth."<sup>109</sup>

Another prominent writer of the Hutterian Brethren says:

The believer fears God and strives to lead his walk and conversation in conformity with his commandments

108. *Hand-Büchel*, chapter 11. Claus Felbinger, an evangelist of the Hutterian Brethren, said: "He who leads a Christian life is a Christian, and he who lives as a heathen is a heathen." "They refer to the atonement of Christ and continue to sin putting their hope in God's mercy. They think that at last a sincere sigh will make it all well, and so every one postpones his conversion to the hour of death, never heeding the words of the Lord, 'To-day if ye hear my voice, harden not your heart.'" (Wiswedel, W., *Bilder und Führergestalten aus dem Täufer-tum*, vol. II, Kassel, 1930, pp. 126, 130).

109. *Rechenschaft*, p. 27.

with an upright and thankful heart in holiness and to the praise of God and Christ. This keeping of God's commands does not lie within human ability, wisdom, or power, but it is God himself who works and accomplishes in his believers both to will and to do the good, so that no flesh should glory but that he who glorieth, should glory in the Lord (II Cor. 10:17).—From all this it is clear that it is needful for the believer to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, and so long as he by valiant warfare in the faith of Christ does not permit sin to rule over him and does not carry out the evil, we say that regenerate man is truly the image of the glory of God.<sup>110</sup>

We do not say that we shall not be tempted to sin or that sin does not make itself felt or rises not within us, but we confess with Paul that when we strive to do good, evil is present with us. So the tendency to sin clings to our flesh, although the spirit strives against it. But we, through God's power and Spirit which is poured out over us according to the measure of our faith, war against it and are thus victorious. As James says: Resist the devil, (that is, sin), and he will flee from you.<sup>111</sup>

---

110. *Hand-Büchel*, chapter 10. Claus Felbinger, an evangelist of the Hutterian Brethren, wrote: "We must distinguish between having sin and doing sin. No man is without sin. They are all partakers of original sin through Adam." (Wiswedel, *Bilder und Führergestalten*, vol. II, p. 133).

111. *Anschlag und Fürwenden der Gottlosen sammt anderen Völkern wider die Frommen, dass sie die unrechtlich beschuldigen, darauf dann die Antwort mit heiliger Schrift gestelt und geben wird. Punktweis verfasst.* Hutterian book in manuscript, of the sixteenth century, containing about 18,000 words. It may be noted that *gottlose* (godless or wicked) refers to the churches that were engaged in the persecution of the Brethren, while by *andere Völker* (other peoples) are meant other churches. This shows the erroneousness of the assertion that the Hutterites spoke of all other churches as the godless, or heathen. Certain writers who made this statement have, as the context shows, overlooked the fact that the leaders of state church Protestantism used similar expressions in reference to both the Anabaptists and the Roman Catholic Church. (Cf. note 101). Zwingli, in his *Elenchus*, speaks of the Swiss Brethren in the most abusive terms. Heinrich Bullinger, in his book *Von dem*



The following incident, taken from the *Great Church Chronicle*, throws light on the position of the Brethren in reference to the point in question.

In the year 1576 Ott Niederlander accepted and defended the opinion that through faith in Christ he was made free not only from sin and transgression but also from inclination to the same. But in our Confession and some of the sermons, he said, the contrary is taught, namely that Christians may feel evil inclinations but that this will not cause them spiritual loss if they do not follow such inclinations but strive against them unto death. He held that evil inclinations defile men and that the teaching of the Church on this point is the cause that some who have never experienced true conversion and live inconsistent lives are found within the Church, for their corrupt nature has never been sanctified. He held that it is the fault of the Church that such inconsistent members are in the Church. That the Apostles express regret concerning their weakness he interpreted to mean something else. In his opinion the "messenger of Satan" which buffeted Paul (II Cor. 12:7) was a wicked man who persecuted him.

Now since this teaching is contrary to the Holy Scriptures and he did not accept correction by the Church, he was excommunicated as one who in heart and mind was separated from the Church.<sup>112</sup>

---

*unverschampten fräfel, ergerlichem verwyrren vnnnd unwarhaftem leeren der selbstigesandten Widertöuffern*, Zurich 1531, says, "They are worse than all unbelievers," "yea, they are devilish enemies and destroyers of the church of God" (fol. 74 f.). In his booklet, *Of the Persecution of the Holy Christian Church* he declares that those who persecute the true Christian church cannot be Christians, while in his books against the Brethren and elsewhere he insists that false doctrine must be suppressed by the civil authorities. Martin Luther often made the statement that the persecutors of the truth are not Christians. (Cf. *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, vol. XXIX, 1908, p. 297). In the draught presenting a plan for the reformation of the national church in Hesse, which was adopted by the synod of Homberg in 1526, those who may refuse to forsake Romanism are referred to as heathen.

112. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 369 seq.

## THE CHURCH

Recently it has been asserted that the Hutterian Church believed itself to be the sinless, immaculate bride of Christ, his mystical spiritual body, the church without which there is no salvation.<sup>113</sup> This would mean that in their opinion all true Christians were members of their organization and that no merely nominal Christians were found in it. Peter Riedemann, in the chapter on "Forgiveness of Sins" in his *Rechen-schaft*, makes a statement which has been taken to mean that salvation is possible only within the Hutterian organization.<sup>114</sup> Evidently this is a misunderstanding. The Hutterian Brethren did not hold this opinion.

The writings of the Hutterian Brethren show clearly that they did not regard all outside of their communion as "the world" or "the godless". These appellations they applied to those who favored their persecution and extermination by fire and sword. They believed community of goods to be an essential characteristic of a true Christian church and recognized as brethren in Christ only those who agreed with them on this and other points. Their general attitude to outsiders is made clear in a booklet of the year 1567<sup>115</sup> which was written "by the brethren, ministers, and elders of the church of God in Moravia which is called the Hutterian Church" and is addressed "to all Swiss Brethren." Here they say that, while they fully believed that there may be among them (the Swiss Brethren) those who have a true

113. Müller, L., *Der Kommunismus der mährischen Wiedertaeufer*, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 30, 43.

114. *Rechen-schaft*, p. 37. Among those who have expressed themselves on this point similarly to Peter Riedemann was Peter Walpot. (*Geschicht-Buch*, p. 345. Walpot is obviously the author of the *Verantwortung* mentioned in the following note in which he admits that those outside the Hutterian Church may be saved.

115. *Verantwortung den Schweizern getan auf ihr Begehren und Anlangen, sieben Artikel betreffend*. Im 1567. Jahr. A Hutterian book in manuscript. This book is mentioned in the *Larger Church Chronicle* (*Geschicht-Buch*, p. 324).

zeal for fulfilling the highest will of God, they can on account of the differences existing between themselves and the Swiss, not regard them as their brethren; nevertheless they readily admit that "there is a great difference between the world [the persecuting state churches] and you."

Again they say in the same booklet:

Such (as have suffered martyrdom without having the full light of the Gospel), we commit to God's decision. If he has regarded their sincerity and that they were faithful to the light which they had received, who are we that we should judge them? It is not unknown to you that in the time when the light was first manifested and before the truth had become fully known, a number of Lutherans stood faithful according to the measure of their knowledge, and in the beginning many brethren of all denominations were put to death through the fury of the Babylonian Woman. They did not have the clear understanding as it is now obtaining but had nevertheless truly and fully given themselves to God. This, we may believe, the Lord has recognized.

The chronicler Caspar Braitmichel, in connection with the account of the martyr death of Heinrich Voes and Johannes Esch, at Brussels, in 1523, says: "Others also who were not further enlightened we count happy having endured and fought a good fight according to the doctrine of Christ (Jas. 5:11)."<sup>116</sup> "I am of the opinion," says Andreas Ehrenpreis, "concerning those who strove to attain to the full truth, that God will graciously grant them eternal salvation."<sup>117</sup>

---

116. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 33.

117. Ehrenpreis, A., *Ein Sendbrief an alle diejenigen, so sich rühmen und bedünken lassen, dass sie ein abgesondertes Volk von der Welt sein wollen, als sonderlich die sich auch Brüder und Schwestern nennen, als Mennisten, Schweizer Brüder und andere mehr. Brüderliche Gemeinschaft, das höchste Gebot der Liebe betreffend. Anno 1652. Reprint, Scottdale, Pa., 1920, p. 171.*

Jeronymus Kaels wrote in 1536 from his prison in Vienna that he believed that a number of prisoners in the same city who were not of the true church of Christ but of the so-called Austerlitz Brethren, (Cf. note 13) but had "so faithfully confessed Christ", could also "in the day of the Lord be found to be of God's kingdom." In 1539<sup>118</sup> the Hutterites who were imprisoned in Castle Falkenstein agreed to recognize the members of another organization, the Philipite Brethren, who had been incarcerated in the same prison, as "fellow citizens in the kingdom of God if they patiently suffered to the end whatever the persecutors might inflict upon them".<sup>119</sup> Concerning the nobleman Friederich von Zierotin, the patron of the Brethren in Moravia, the Hutterian chronicler expresses the hope that he may be an heir of eternal bliss.<sup>120</sup>

The Hutterian Brethren did not hold the opinion that all members of their organization were true Christians living consistent lives. It goes without saying that minor transgressions, though defined as sin, were not followed by excommunication. The *Ordnungen* for the various crafts, including the *Schulordnung* of 1578, show that the fact of failings and transgressions on the part of church members was freely recognized. While those who fell into offensive sin were excommunicated without preceding admonition, it was well known that sin demanding excommunication did not always come to light immediately. One of the writers of the Brethren says further: "It is true that at times there are among us under the appearance of disciples of Christ many wicked, such as fornicators and other knaves, and they partake of the Lord's supper with us. But such evil, secret, hypocritical rogues were also found in the church at the time

---

118. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 96.

119. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 158.

120. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 328.



of Christ."<sup>121</sup> In the Great Church Chronicle also the fact is freely recognized that evil men may be found within the Brotherhood.<sup>122</sup>

### THE COMMUNITY OF GOODS

The community of earthly goods was for the Hutterian Brethren "the highest command of love." One of their writings, dated 1601, contains the following:

With us in Christian fellowship and community of goods, the daily labor of a believer is all a labor of mercy, a work of loving service, faithfulness and pure charity and love. All the fruit of the labor of the Brethren is consecrated to the Lord for the support of the hungry and nourishment of the aged. They do not merely provide food, drink and shelter for themselves, but provide the same likewise for their fellow-members, so that the feeble, the sick, the widows, and orphans be cared for and the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind be bidden to come (Luke 14:13).<sup>123</sup>—Each one is to consecrate himself entirely with all that he has to the service of God and his saints.<sup>124</sup>

Again, the following is a citation from a booklet of the year 1593 addressed to a literary opponent of the Brethren:

The Christian community of goods is for the purpose of providing for the needy believers who may be old, sick, crippled and unable to support themselves, so that they be furnished with the necessities of life the same as the others. But you say there can be no community of goods if such are present. You understand the Christian principle

---

121. *Anschlag und Fürwenden* (manuscript).

122. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 370.

123. *Widerlegung und Antwort der Brüder in Mähren, welche man die Hutterischen nennt auf des Christian Raussenbergers im Schweizerland Schreiben*. 1601. Booklet in manuscript.

124. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 270.

of community of goods about as well as a blind man appreciates colors.<sup>125</sup>

In the year 1606 Joseph Hausser wrote the following:

By community of goods I understand not that one gives only something of that which is superfluous and keeps the most for himself, as was the case under the law and is today the common custom the world over. But the community of goods of which we speak means that all that one possesses is surrendered, the heart is freed from it, and it is gladly and voluntarily given over, as the spirit of the Gospel requires and as the saints in Jerusalem did.<sup>126</sup>

Many thousands of those that love God, both men and women, have forsaken large earthly possessions, houses and lands and surrendered their own will; many of them have come to the Brotherhood (in Moravia) with empty hands (seeing themselves compelled to flee for their lives) and have thanked God a thousand times during their life that he granted them enlightenment, and would not have

- 
125. *Der Hutterischen Brüder Antwort auf des Colman Rorers, des Fläxianischen Lehrers Lesterung und Schreiben*. Anno 1593. Booklet in manuscript. Colman Rorer was a Lutheran minister of the party of Matthias Flacius.
  126. *Unter-Richtung das die Gemeinschaft der zeitlichen Güter ein Lehr des neuen Testaments sei und von allen Glaubigen erfordert werde*. Geschrieben auf Wenglen in Preussen von Josef Hausser aus Mähren. 1605. Book in manuscript. Chapter 1. "You say, what you possess, you have for the welfare of your servant, neighbor, and brother," Peter Walpot wrote to a Unitarian friend, "I should have to inquire of them how much of it you are using in this way." (*Geschicht-Buch*, p. 349). Ulrich Zwingli, in his book, *Of Divine and Human Righteousness* (1523) expressed the opinion that private property is sin, being the result of a lack of love toward our neighbor. He says: "Even if we were not sinful by nature, the sin of having private property would suffice to condemn us before God; for that which he gives us freely, we appropriate to ourselves." (*Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke*, vol. II, Leipzig, 1808, p. 511). William Pauck, in an article on *Martin Bucer's Conception of a Christian State*, points out that "Bucer's ideal state is that of a Christian communism." (*The Princeton Theological Review*, vol. XXVI, p. 88). Compare the book by the same author, *Das Reich Gottes auf Erden; Eine Untersuchung zu Butzers "De Regno Christi,"* etc., Berlin und Leipzig, 1928.

given up this life for all the wealth, honor and glory of the world.<sup>127</sup>

### THE PRINCIPLE OF NONRESISTANCE

The Swiss Brethren and Hutterites, like the primitive Christians,<sup>127a</sup> believed that Christ, by precept and example, enjoined upon his followers the principle of nonresistance. This sufficed to settle this difficult question for them. They recognized war to be a gross violation of Christian principles in general, involving disloyalty to the rulership of Jesus Christ, who has commanded the very contrary; yet they realized that the causes of war are ever present in the world. And they believed it incongruous to refuse to take part in war and at the same time approve of law suits and of doing police duty. Among them these things were not tolerated. In their opinion there is, in principle, no difference between certain phases of police activity in times of peace and meeting an organized attack of insurrectionists or invaders, although such disturbances are not generally classed as war unless they grow into larger proportions. And they readily admitted that a *spannung* (tension or paradox) exists between their approval of a civil government which exercises force and their refusal to use the sword at the government's bidding. They were convinced however that true Christianity is necessarily paradoxical in a world of sin.<sup>128</sup>

---

127. Ehrenpreis, *Sendbrief*, p. 40. The men and women who came to Moravia to unite with the Brotherhood saw themselves compelled to leave their homes in all secrecy. Only in exceptional cases could those who owned real estate dispose of it. Such property was confiscated by the authorities. Becoming a member of the community a person "gave himself with all that he had to God and his church." Every applicant was explicitly told that he had no right to the property of the church in case of withdrawal or expulsion, and of what he may have brought he could demand nothing back.

127a. Compare Cadoux, C. J., *The Early Christian Attitude to War*, London, 1919, the standard work on this subject.

128. The Hutterian Brethren did not hold the opinion that the world is in a process of development into the kingdom of God through progress in

The Hutterian Brethren as well as the Swiss Brethren taught that civil government is ordained of God; it is a divine institution, although not in any such sense as the church, which is spoken of in Scripture as the mystical body of Christ, the bride of Christ. The fundamental differences in the character of these institutions are evidenced by the fact that no one can be a true member of the church without being a Christian; while, on the other hand, a non-Christian may be a law-abiding citizen. Civil government is a divine institution in the sense that it is God's will that every nation should have a government, and even a poor government is better than anarchy. It was at the time of the reign of the emperor Nero that the Apostle speaks of the government as "the minister of God", since, as he says further, all power is of God, and evil in the world must be restrained by force. (Compare Jer. 29:9; 27:6; 43:10). This does not by any means say that Nero would have qualified for church membership.

The supposition that the principle of nonresistance, as held by the Brethren, meant that they condemned the use of force by the world powers is unfounded. They realized that

---

civilization, education and moral reform movements. They believed that sin in the individual and evil in the world are of such a nature that human progress cannot effect the needed regeneration in either case. The Hutterians of our day believe that modern progress has changed neither the individual human heart nor the character of the world. For evidence they point to such facts as this, that the latest developments of science are to be utilized for unprecedented destruction of human life in war. The modern idea of Christ as the saviour of the world, in the sense that he is the leader in movements for world regeneration through reforms, falls short by far of representing his true saviourhood. He is the Redeemer of those only who have been personally saved, and in consequence own and follow him as their Lord. The world is to be overcome—not assimilated. As to the final victory of the kingdom of God there can be no possible doubt, even if society as a whole, or the nations, will never come under the rule of Christ. God's kingdom upon earth is only one phase of the kingdom, just as the earthly life of the individual comprises but a short span of his existence. Eternal life and heaven are real to the Christian believer who takes his profession seriously and lives in touch with God.



a civil government could not be maintained by the principles of the Sermon on the Mount on which Christ established his church. They did not believe that in this sermon our Lord was calling upon Herod and Pilate to open the prisons and dismiss the police forces. A government that would rely on the exercise of the Christian graces and good admonitions, to the exclusion of coercion, would be a government in name only. The Brethren believed it impossible to punish wrongdoers (I Pet. 2:14) and maintain order in the world by living the Christ life. True, Scripture teaches the duty of heaping coals of fire upon the heads of those who do wrong. However, Scripture also speaks of those who have "seared" consciences, and upon whom therefore the "coals of fire" do not have the desired effect. These things will not suffice to restrain sin and crime in the world.

The Brethren shared with Martin Luther the view that a government using force would be unnecessary if the human race had not fallen into sin. They differed from Luther by insisting that, since the world cannot be ruled by nonresistance and love, ("the law of Christ", Gal. 6:2), it is not the Christian's business to be an administrator or executive of government, or an officer for law enforcement. They believed that it is not the Christian's calling to maintain law and order in the world by force. To this view the objection has often been raised that Christians would make the best rulers or civil executives. However, the principle that religious qualifications are to be required of candidates for public offices, or of applicants for naturalization did not prove fruitful of good consequences. It was necessarily abandoned with the separation of church and state.<sup>128a</sup>

---

128a. It was noted above that the Christian principle of nonresistance is paradoxical in a world such as Scripture describes and as we know it to exist. There is and always will be what the Germans designate as a *spannung* (tension or paradox) between the principles of Christ and the demands made by actual conditions as they exist in the world. But is not Christianity itself a paradox in the world? Can a Christianity that has made its peace with the world and has ceased to be paradoxical be true Christianity?

In the year 1535, when the Brotherhood in Moravia had been expelled and driven from its dwellings, Jacob Hutter wrote to the Moravian government as follows:

Here we lie upon the barren heath, as God wills, without harm to anyone. We do not wish nor desire to do harm or evil to any man, yea not to our worst enemies. And all our life and deeds, words and work are open to all. Yea before we would knowingly wrong a man to the value of a penny, we would rather lose a hundred pounds, and before we would strike our greatest enemy with the hand, to say nothing of gun, sword, or halberd, as the world does, we would rather die and let our own lives be taken. We have no material weapons, neither spear nor gun, as every one can see. Altogether our preaching and testimony, life and walk is that men should, according to the truth and righteousness of God, live peacefully and in unity as the true followers of Christ.<sup>129</sup>

The Hutterian Confession of Faith (*Rechenschaft*) contains the following articles on nonresistance and a few related subjects.

Since Christ, the Prince of Peace, has prepared for himself a kingdom, which is the church, and has purchased it with his own blood, all worldly warfare has ceased in his kingdom (Luke 2:14; Eph. 5:1, 2; Isa. 11:6-9; Micah 4:3). Therefore no Christian takes the sword or partakes in war, as Paul exhorts and says: "Avenge not yourselves, dearly beloved, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." (Rom. 12:19; Deut. 32:25; Heb. 12:19-21). Now, since vengeance is of God and not of us, it should be left to him and should not be practiced by us. For since we are followers of Christ, we must also manifest the spirit of him

---

129. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 112.

who, although he could have done it, did not return evil for evil (I Pet. 2:21-23).<sup>130</sup>

### CONCERNING THE MAKING OF SWORDS

Since, as said above, Christians shall beat up or lay down their swords, they can much less manufacture them, for they are of no other use than to harm, wound and destroy men, and Christ did not come to destroy (Luke 9:55). Now, as Christians should not practice vengeance (Matt. 5:38-48; Rom. 12:19-21), they may not make the means by which others may practice such vengeance and destruction, lest they become partakers of their sin. Therefore we do not make swords, spears, guns, nor other such weapons. But what is made for the daily need and use of man, such as knives, axes, hoes, etc., we may and do make. But if some one should say, with such implements also one may harm and injure another, we reply that they are not made for the purpose of harm and destruction, and therefore we can consistently make them. If some one uses them to harm another, that is not our responsibility; let him bear his own judgment.<sup>131</sup>

### CONCERNING TAXES

Since civil government is ordained of God and this office ordered by him, therefore paying taxes is also ordained and commanded, as Paul says: "For this cause pay ye tribute also" (Rom. 13:6). Therefore we willingly pay taxes and customs, or however it may be designated, for we have learned this from our Master, Christ, who not only paid it himself but commanded others to do so, saying: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt.

---

130. *Rechenschaft*, p. 105.

131. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

22:21). For this reason we, as his disciples, desire to follow and perform faithfully his command in this regard. But for warfare, destruction of life and shedding of blood (when taxes are asked for such particular purposes) we give nothing. This we do not out of wantonness or stubbornness but because of the fear of God, that we may not become partakers of others' sins.<sup>132</sup>

#### WHETHER A CHRISTIAN MAY USE THE LAW

Since therefore, as stated above, all temporal possessions are to be foreign to us and not our own, therefore a Christian cannot quarrel or sue at law concerning such things, but should much rather (as one whose heart is turned away from the world and set upon heavenly things) suffer injustice, as Paul teaches in I Cor. 6:1-8.—That Christians must not sue at law Christ teaches in the words: "If any man will sue thee at law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also" (Matt. 5:40), by which he means to say that one should leave that which others would take from you, rather than to quarrel with them.

The Hutterian Confession has the following *On the Making of Clothes and Of Inns*.

We desire to serve our fellow men with all diligence and to minister with our labor to his various needs, always so that God may be honored therein and that our industry and integrity may be manifested in the quality of our work. But that which serves only the purposes of pride, pomp and vanity, we make for no one, that we may maintain a clear conscience before our God. For not only are we under duty before God to shun these things in our own life, but also to testify against such sins. Now, if this is a

---

132. *Ibid.*, p. 107.



matter against which we should testify, we surely cannot aid in carrying it out.<sup>133</sup>

We do not permit one of our Brotherhood to be a public innkeeper, to sell wine or beer, since all kinds of immoral, ungodly and wicked things take place in connection with the same, and all drunken, worthless fellows come together in the drinking houses to carry out their wantonness, to whom the innkeeper gives place and is compelled to be witness to their blasphemy. This, however, we do, and do rightfully: If some one is absent from his home and must lodge at a strange place and comes to one of our brethren, he is taken in and entertained, served and hospitably treated according to ability, not however for money but free and without cost. We find that the saints of old did likewise, showing hospitality.<sup>134</sup>

#### THE SUPPOSED TREASURE OF THE HUTTERIANS

We know from various sources that the Hutterian Brethren in Moravia were supposed to have had a great treasure. Christoph Andreas Fischer wrote in 1607 that for seventy years they had been laying up money with the intention to rise in arms against Christendom at an opportune time, for, so this writer says, "all their thought and purpose has the object to destroy Christendom with the sword."<sup>135</sup> And yet, the same writer says in another place that they made neither swords nor other weapons of defence.

---

133. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

134. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

135. *Vier und Funfftzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 109. "They have both the will and the money to do this," this author says in the same place. And again: "If the Anabaptists get possession of a fortress or castle, you will find out what had been their intention for these many years" (p. 109). This accusation belongs to the same category as the same writer's assertion that in their communion services "they drink until they are fully intoxicated" (p. 98), or that the head pastor Claus Braidl lived in the grossest adultery and lewdness (p. 94).

It is a fact, as has been previously shown, that during the "favorable times" in Moravia they saved and laid aside money for times of emergency and need, such as they had repeatedly experienced. Persecution, it must be remembered, always stared them in the face, even in times of tranquillity. No one could foretell just when the friendly Moravian nobles would be compelled to comply with the demands of the kings of Austria to drive them out, as had been done in the persecutions of 1535 and 1548. Frequently the Moravian lords were urged to yield to the desires of the higher authorities in Vienna. On the other hand, the nobles again and again reiterated before the royal government their opinion that expelling the Brethren would entail too great a loss to the country. A number of times the royal authorities granted them a respite of one year only.<sup>136</sup> The severe sentences that were repeatedly pronounced over the Brethren were again and again suspended because of the opposition of the Moravian nobility.

When at a time of great tribulation, shortly before their final expulsion from Moravia, the Brethren had been robbed by the Cardinal von Dietrichstein of most of their savings, the chronicler says that it was for emergencies such as their banishment from Moravia that this money had been saved. And Andreas Ehrenpreis wrote in 1642: "If our fathers had not, by their faithful diligence and forethought, made such provision, the Brotherhood would have perished through hunger and privation in times of war and persecution."<sup>137</sup>

Moreover, Moravia was not infrequently visited by dearth and famine. In such times it became necessary to live off the savings of former years. In the great famine of 1569-71 the savings of the Brotherhood were almost com-

---

136. For example, in 1567 (Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 150).

137. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 624.

pletely exhausted, although the "households" were put on rations.<sup>138</sup>

### A TRUE BROTHERHOOD

From a number of the older writings of the Brethren it is clear that usually there were in their households many widows, orphans and others unable to work. In the year 1590 the elders reported, in a document addressed to the Moravian lords, that they had among themselves "many feeble and invalid folk, such that are unable to work" and must be cared for.<sup>139</sup> It is impossible to know today whether this was partly due to the circumstance that for such people the community life may have had particular attractions. Some years later the Moravian provincial governor, Friedrich von Zierotin, wrote to the higher authorities in Vienna that there was among the Brethren "a great hospital" and that one who could work had to support six to seven others who were unable to earn their bread.<sup>140</sup> In the year 1652 the head pastor Andreas Ehrenpreis wrote that they were, for the sake of the faith, driven from Moravia, losing practically all their earthly possessions. They fled "with many aged, invalids and children" (while many able-bodied persons forsook the Brotherhood) and they "held together, bore the hardships and suffered together, cared for the sick and aged, and with the utmost of our ability helped each other, as becometh brethren and sisters who profess the Christian faith."<sup>141</sup>

---

138. *Ibid.*, p. 330. In famine times the Brethren rendered material aid to many needy outsiders. (*Geschicht-Buch*, pp. 330, 621, 463). In the year 1638, in a severe famine, from 50 to 80 such persons were daily fed in some of the "households."

139. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 430. A similar statement is found in a letter of 1596 written by the elders to the Moravian authorities. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 444.

140. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, p. 322.

141. Ehrenpreis, *Sendbrief*, p. 109.

## SEPARATION VS. DIVORCE

Various opponents of the Brethren have asserted that often those who went from other provinces to Moravia left their families behind. To this charge the Brethren replied:

No one may do this without good counsel. We permit often that they (in case one partner of a married couple joins the Brotherhood) live together a long time in other provinces or here in Moravia.<sup>142</sup> We often permit a believing partner to live with the unbelieving partner outside of our common households, indeed at times for many years, as long as we observe that the believer does not suffer loss to his soul.<sup>143</sup> It is not divorce, even if one partner for such reasons leaves the other; and if the other partner decides to follow and amend his life, it is again an undivided marriage.<sup>144</sup>

To the charge that in the Hutterian Brotherhood the choice of marriage partners was not free but was regulated according to the will and decision of the elders, the Brethren replied in the year 1567, that among them only such enter the state of matrimony "who in the fear of the Lord by mutual consent desire to become man and wife."—"For we (the elders) deal with each one separately and do not ask any one to choose against his inclinations."<sup>145</sup>

---

142. *Widerlegung und Antwort der Brüder in Mähren*, 1601. (Manuscript). Cf. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 239.

143. *Verantwortung den Schweizern getan*, 1567 (Manuscript).

144. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 237. Outside of Moravia persons uniting with the Hutterian Church were exposed to the greatest dangers and naturally desired to go to the land of freedom and join the community life. As pointed out in this citation, separation did not mean dissolution of the marriage vow, or divorce. A separated person was not permitted to marry while his partner was living.

145. *Widerlegung und Antwort*. While this is correct, it is also true that no marriage could be concluded without the consent of the elders. This is often stated in the Hutterian writings.



## UNCOMPROMISING RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE

The early Hutterian Brethren from deeply religious motives stood uncompromisingly by their rules of conduct and practice. One of their ministers, in 1531, was excommunicated because, when his wife had fallen into the gross sin of adultery but had repented and confessed to him, he had counselled only with a few others but had not informed the elders of the church. In 1581 the colony of the Brethren at Wastnitz in Moravia was driven out because members of the Brotherhood refused to assist in making preparations for a wedding which was to be celebrated in worldly fashion. The chronicler relates this incident as follows:

In the year 1581 we were compelled to leave Wastnitz where we had maintained a Bruderhof for eleven years. Lord Franz, Count von Thurn, expelled us for the primary reason that those of our brethren and sisters who were in his service refused to aid in the preparations for a wedding for which he was making arrangements and to which many other lords were invited. The head cook of the Count was one of our sisters and she (in accordance with the church rules in this regard) would not help to prepare the hens and geese for the wedding nor to supervise the work of preparation.

We do not have any part in such things, for to do so would be inconsistent with the true Christian faith and a burden to our conscience. We do not assist in such weddings and similar festivals, because God is disregarded and the lust of the flesh and the pride of life (I John 2: 16), yea indeed all sorts of excess and grave immoderation, manifesting itself in pride, gluttony, drunkenness and great misuse of the gifts of God, are practiced; also dancing and all wantonness, all of which is altogether anti-Christian and contrary to God. Therefore we do not assist in such affairs but avoid these things that we may not

become partakers of others' sin but keep our consciences pure and undefiled by such things.

For this cause the Count became very angry and declared that as truly as he was Count, he would no longer tolerate us on his estate. Besides, his preacher [the Count was a Protestant] bent his energies upon urging and inciting him, not to tolerate us on his lands, speaking to him about his duty to conscience and of divine judgment. We presented to the Count, both orally and in writing, our defence, but matters had gone too far; it was all to no avail. He had promised solemnly to drive us out. So we moved from Wastnitz with our aged, widows, orphans and small children. Our property: house, barns, fields, vineyard, and meadows which had been built and improved by hard and diligent labor, had to be sold at considerable loss in order to leave the region within the appointed time which the count had set for us. Thus we moved away.

But the Count had reason to regret what he had done. For just as we left the place, the Countess became ill and died within three weeks thereafter. She would not receive the sacrament from her preacher and there is reason to believe that she was highly displeased because he had incited the Count against us.<sup>146</sup>

#### RELIGIOUS CERTAINTY

It is not probable that there ever was a people who took religion more seriously than did the Hutterites in their best period. Their vital Biblical faith and devoted Christian life resulted in a peace of mind, a consciousness of fellowship with God which made them aflame with certainty. Of their martyrs it is said that they would not consent to the least deviation from their faith and practice, even if by so doing they could save their lives. A recent writer says: "They evidently had not the slightest misgivings as to their

---

146. *Geschicht-Buch*, p. 405.

position, and they considered the smallest of their peculiarities well worth dying for." However, the reason why they valued their peculiarities so highly was that they designed their whole life to be religious, placing religion above every other interest. Their peculiarities were parts of their religious life, though in themselves some of these may have seemed insignificant. A recent writer who spent a number of months among the Hutterites in Canada says:

As you sit talking with your host (in a Hutterian colony), quietly, without any formality of knocking, the men and women, and boys and girls of the community file into the room, all eager to hear the conversation of the stranger. There will be but one subject discussed, no matter how cleverly you may try to avoid it: and that subject will be religion; for it is the one subject that permeates all Hutterian thought, the one subject in the light of which the Brethren judge of every other. Twentieth Century America knows little of that sort of piety which makes the enveloping atmosphere of all Hutterian life. Hutterian people think in terms of the Bible and talk in scriptural language. Their sermons on Sunday are little more than a succession of Bible verses, with brief running comments; and their daily conversation is almost as biblical.<sup>147</sup>

#### CHURCH DISCIPLINE

A number of persons were excommunicated by the Brethren for disowning the creed of the church, and excommunication meant expulsion from the communities except for such as desired to be re-accepted on the terms laid down by the church. A recent writer holds that such treatment accorded to those who dissented from their doctrine was persecution, and further intimates that there is in principle no difference between it and the way dissenters were dealt with

---

147. Clark, *The Hutterian Communities*, p. 363.

by the state church Protestants.<sup>148</sup> Now, church discipline cannot be classed as persecution. Even secular organizations, such as the Free Masons, use discipline and expulsion. Church discipline is taught in Scripture and was practiced by the apostolic church. There cannot be a New Testament church without the use of discipline. Between the Hutterites and persecution of those who differed from them stood, among other things, their emphatic rejection of any union between church and state, their insistence that the state must not meddle in matters of faith, and their strictly consistent attitude on the principle of nonresistance.

The same writer says: "Of tolerance and the modern idea of liberty of thought and freedom of religious opinion there is not a trace to be found among the Anabaptists."<sup>149</sup> The correctness of this statement depends on the definition of freedom of religious opinion. In our day the view is widely prevalent that the same tolerance should be granted in religion as is exercised in things that concern citizenship and politics. It is true that none of the Anabaptist sects or leaders, with the possible exception of Hans Denk, accepted such a principle of tolerance.

The Hutterian Brethren believed that, since the state is a non-religious institution, one may be unorthodox, or even irreligious, and at the same time be a law-abiding citizen performing one's duties toward the government, and that therefore the rights of citizenship should not depend on religious qualifications. To demand religious qualifications for citizenship is contrary to the Hutterian principle of the strict separation of church and state. On the other hand, the idea that the same tolerance is to be exercised in the religious as in the political field; in other words, that no religious qualifications should be required for membership in a religious body, is an altogether different matter. Had the Hutter-

---

148. Müller, *Kommunismus*, p. 80.

149. *Ibid.*, p. 80.



ites entertained such views of tolerance, their willingness to suffer martyrdom for their faith would have been glaringly inconsistent.

Ritualism had no place in Hutterian economy. "As in their entire life, so also in their worship," says Dr. Joseph Beck, "the Brethren manifested simplicity and sobriety.—Instrumental music, pictures or statues, and all external display were excluded from their places of worship as a matter of course. There were neither towers nor bells."<sup>150</sup> Indeed, in Moravia they had no church buildings nor meeting houses. They met for worship in their dining halls.<sup>151</sup>

#### A MODERN WRITER ON THE PRESENT-DAY ORGANIZATION OF THE HUTTERIAN COMMUNITIES<sup>152</sup>

Dr. Bertha W. Clark, who has become personally acquainted with present day Hutterian life in various colonies, says in her essay mentioned before:

At the head of each community or village stand two men, the preacher who ministers to the spiritual needs of the group, and the *Wirt* or Householder (often unfortunately called the "Boss" in North America), who has

---

150. Beck, *Geschichts-Bücher*, Vorrede, p. 13.

151. Christoph Andreas Fischer says to the point: "Never heathen was so godless, no Jew so hardened, no heretic so wicked who would not build his god a temple, his Mohammed a mosque, the Jew his God a synagogue, the heretic a chapel, for the strengthening of his error. But the Pharisaical Anabaptists are blinder than the heathen, more impious than the Turks, more hardened than the Jews, more cursed than all other heretics, for they have no churches nor chapels nor any such places in which they hold their religious services; yea, they entirely disapprove of having such places. For although they have in Moravia more than seventy large residence buildings, not to mention their farm buildings and mills, there is not found among them a single church building, not one chapel or altar. Yea, before they would build one little church, they would a thousand times rather build dwelling houses, pigstys and dining halls. Their sermons they have twice a week in their dining halls." (Fischer, *Vier und funfftzig Erhebliche Ursachen*, p. 78).

152. Clark, *Hutterian Communities*, p. 365.

charge of industrial affairs. To advise these two men and assist them there is a body of elders, usually numbering five. These men, as a rule, hold office for life.

The preacher is chosen partly by lot. The male members of the Brotherhood name those men in the community whom they consider fit for this office, and then cast lots to determine which of these shall serve. The preacher is on probation for several months and then, if acceptable to the communion, is ordained.

The Wirt and the elders are chosen by direct vote of the voting body. This voting body consists of the male members of the church. Practically all power resides in the hands of this body. Although they delegate extremely great power to the Wirt and the preacher, they always reserve the right to depose either of them in case they prove unfaithful or unequal to the trust that has been given them. Such depositions have been not at all rare throughout Hutterian history. All matters of importance have to be acted upon by the voting body before they can be transacted.

The Wirt handles all the money of the community, holds the keys to the community storehouses, and arranges and directs all the community work. Under him and responsible to him there are sub-officers in charge of each separate craft—the farm boss for the work in the fields, the head miller, the carpenter, blacksmith, shoemaker, head cook, and so on. Each of these receives whatever supplies are needed from the “Wirt,” and each turns over to him all the products of his department of work.

There is no money in circulation within a community. The only money used is that required for dealing with the world outside. There is nothing whatever within a community that is thought of as private property. On enter-

ing the Hutterian church a person gives over to it everything that he possesses; and if he leaves, he can demand nothing back. This fact is made definitely clear to every applicant.





## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The history of the Hutterian Brethren was practically unknown to church historians before the appearance of the work by Dr. Joseph Beck, *Die Geschichtsbücher der Wiedertäufer*, Vienna, 1883. This work is a reproduction of a number of the chronicles of the Brethren and other source material which the author collected from Austrian and Hungarian archives and libraries. Besides the material used for this book, Dr. Beck (who died in 1887) gathered a great mass of other source material on the same subject which was turned over to Professor Johann Loserth, of the University of Graz, in Austria, who made extensive use of it in various of his writings.

Dr. Beck, in his research work found many references to the *Gemeinde-Geschicht-Buch*, the most important source work for early Hutterian history. This is commonly called the *Larger Church Chronicle* to distinguish it from the later chronicle of Johannes Waldner (1749-1824). The latter is known as the *Smaller Church Chronicle*, although through additions made by succeeding writers its size has nearly outgrown that of the older chronicle. Dr. Beck's efforts to locate a copy of the *Larger Chronicle* were unsuccessful, since he was unaware that the Brotherhood still existed in America. The church at Creutz in Transylvania, which fled to Wallachia and then migrated to Russia, did not have this book, but in 1773 obtained it from Alwintz, and later another copy from Sabatisch. These two codices are now in possession of the Brotherhood in America. The two manuscripts are not identically the same, one having considerable material that is not found in the other. The somewhat briefer copy was printed in 1923 through the efforts of Elder Elias Walter, of Macleod, Alta., Canada, under the title, *Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder*.<sup>153</sup> The manuscript was prepared for the printer by Professor Rudolf Wolkan, of Vienna. This work contains the history of the Brethren from their origin

---

153. An important review of this work, written by the late Professor Heinrich Böhmer of Leipzig, is found in *Theologisches Literaturblatt* (Leipzig), vol. LXVII, No. 22.

to the year 1685. The chroniclers were Caspar Braitmichel,<sup>154</sup> Hans Krärl, Hauptrecht Zapff,<sup>155</sup> and others.

The *Smaller Church Chronicle* records the history of the Decline of the church in Hungary and Transylvania and its subsequent revival and further experiences until the time of the migration from Russia to America. The manuscript has been prepared for publication by Dr. Johann Loserth and will be published in the near future.

### MANUSCRIPTS

The manuscripts and codices are in possession of the Bruderhof near Macleod, Alberta, Canada (Elias Walter, minister) and several other Bruderhofs. All of them exist in a number of copies. Besides the manuscripts here mentioned there are large collections of letters and sermons from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

*Anschlag und Fuerwenden der Gottlosen sammt anderen Voelkern wider die Frommen, das sie die unrechtlich beschuldigen. Darauf dann die Antwort aus heiliger Schrift gestellt und geben wird. Punktweis verfasst. 1561.*

Braidl C., *Ein Widerlegung und warhafftige Verantwortung der allegrausamisten Gotteslesterung, Schmach und unwarhafftigen Beschuldigungen, so Christoph Andreas Fischer, Pfarrer zu Feldsperg ueber uns Brueder erdacht, 1064.*

*Der Huettlerischen Brueder Antwort auf des Colman Rorers, der Flaexianischen Lehrers Laesterung und Schreiben. Anno 1593.*

*Hand-Buechel wider den proces der zu Wurms am Rein wider die Brueder so man die Hutterischen nennt aussgangen, 1557.*

*Kurze Widerlegung des grossen Streitz von Christo Jesu, dem Sohn Gottes, wie er von Christoff Osterroth in seinem im Druck ausgegangenen Buechel sammt seinem Anhang, als Polnischen Bruedern oder Arrianern, schimpflich und nachtheilig verkleinert wird. 1654.*

*Unterrichtung dass die Gemeinschaft der zeitlichen Gueter ein Lehr des Neuen Testaments sei und von allen Glaubigen erfordert werde. Geschrieben auf Wenglen in Preussen von Joseph Hausser, 1605.*

*Verantwortung den Schweizern getan auf ihr Begehren und Anliegen, sieben Artikel halben. An alle Brueder insgemein so man die Schweizer nennt,*

---

154. Braitmichel was one of the Brethren who were imprisoned at Falkenstein and condemned to the galleys but escaped from their prison in the year 1540. He recorded the history only to the year 1542 (*Geschichtsbuch*, p. 40).

155. Zapff evidently wrote the chronicle from 1542 to 1549. He is mentioned by Fischer, *Vier und funfftzig Ursachen*, p. 65.

- sie seien in Maehren oder ausserhalb in anderen Landen Wohnhaft. Im 1567 Jahr.
- Widerlegung und Antwort der Brueder in Maehren, welche man die Hutterischen nennet, auf des Christian Raussenberger im Schweizerland Schreiben. 1601.

## BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- Ammann, H., "Die Wiedertaeufer in Michelsburg im Pustertal." *Programm des Staatsgymnasiums in Brixen*, 1896, 1897.
- Arnold, E., "Die heutige Neuentstehung eines alttaeuerischen Bruderhofes in Deutschland," *Wahrheitsfreund* (Chicago) Nos. 7 and 8, 1929.
- Ausbund, das ist etliche schoene christliche Lieder, wie die im Gefaengnis zu Passau in dem Schloss von den Schweizer Bruedern und andern rechtglaeubigen Christen hin und her gedichtet worden. (1564) Elfte Auflage, Elkhart, Ind., 1913.
- "Austrian Anabaptists in America." *The American Review of Reviews*. New York, August, 1908.
- Bax, B., *Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists*, 1903.
- Beck, J. v., *Die Geschichtsbuecher der Wiedertaeufer in Oesterreich-Ungarn, betreffend deren Schicksale in der Schweiz, Salzburg, Ober- und Nieder-Oesterreich, Maehren, Tirol, Boehmen, Sued-Deutschland, Ungarn, Siebenbuergen und Sued-Russland in der Zeit von 1526 bis 1785; Fontes rerum Austriacarum, II, Bd. CLIII*, Wien, 1883.
- Bender, H. S., "The New Hutterite Bruderhof in Germany," *Christian Monitor* (Scottsdale, Pa.), January, 1931.
- Bossert, G., *Quellen zur Geschichte der Wiedertaeufer, Bd. I, Herzogtum Wuerttemberg. Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte, herausgegeben vom Verein fuer Reformationsgeschichte, Bd. XIII*, Leipzig, 1930.
- "Eine amerikanische Quelle fuer Wuerttembergische Geschichte und Literatur des sechzehnten u. siebzehnten Jahrhunderts. (Die Lieder der Hutterischen Brueder.) *Beilage des Staats-Anzeigers fuer Wuerttemberg*, 1. Juni, 1916.
- "Wiedertaeuferbischoeffe aus Wuerttemberg." *Schwaebische Kronik. Beilage zur Wuerttemberger Zeitung*.
- Braght, T. J. v., *The Bloody Theatre, or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians who baptized only upon Confession of Faith, and who suffered and died for the Testimony of Jesus, their Saviour, from the time of Christ to the year 1660*. Translated from the Dutch. Elkhart, Ind., 1886.
- Clark, Bertha W., *The Hutterian Communities*. Reprinted from the *Journal of Political Economy*, 1924, pp. 357-74, pp. 468-86.
- *Die Hutterischen Gemeinschaften*. Leipzig, 1929. (Translation of the foregoing work).
- Cornelius, C. A., *Geschichte des Muensterischen Aufruhrs*, Bd. II, *Die Wiedertaufe*, Leipzig, 1860.
- Correll, E. H., *Das Schweizerische Taeufermennonitentum*, Tuebingen, 1925.

- "Anabaptism in Tyrol, a Review and Discussion of George Loesche's *Archivalische Beitræge zur Geschichte des Tæufertums und des Protestantismus in Tirol und Voralberg*. Wien und Leipzig, 1926. *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. I, No. 4.
- Deets, L. E., *The Origins of Conflict in the Hutterische Communities*. Reprinted from *Publications of the Sociological Society of America*, Vol. XXV, No. 2, May, 1931.
- Douglas, Dorothy W. and Du Pre Lumpkin, Katharine, article "Communitistic Settlements" in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. IV, New York, 1931 pp. 95-102.
- Ehrenpreis, A., *Ein Sendbrief an alle diejenigen, die sich rühmen und beduenken lassen, dass sie ein abgesondertes Volk von der Welt sein wollen, als sonderlich die sich auch Brueder und Schwestern nennen, als Mennisten, Schweizer Brueder und andere mehr, wo sie hin und wieder in viel Orten und Landen, in dunkeln, neblichten Tagen [Ezekiel 34:12] dieser Welt zerstreut sind. Bruederliche Gemeinschaft, das hoechste der Liebe betreffend. Anno 1652. Reprint, Scottsdale, Pa., 1920.*
- Ewert, J. G., *Die Hutterischen Mennoniten im Militaergefaengnis*. Hillsboro, Kansas, 1919.
- Ein anderes schoenes neues Lied darin der Betrug und arglistig Art der hutterischen Wiedertæufer warhafftig und eigentlich vor Augen gestellt wird, durch Johannes Eysvogel von Coeln, gewest hutterischer Wiedertæufferbruder zu Austerlitz in Maehren, 1586.*
- Erhard, C., *Gruendliche und kurtzverfaszte Historie von den Muensterischen Widertæuffern*. Muenchen, 1583.
- Fischer, C. A., *Von der Widertæuffer Verfluchtem Ursprung, Gottlosen Lehre, vnd derselben gruendliche widerlegung, nach welcher gefragt wirdt Ob die Widertæuffer im Landt zu leyden seind oder nicht*. Bruck an der Teya, 1603.
- *Antwort auff die Widerlegung so Claus Breutel, der Widertæuffer koenig und oberste, samt seinen Spiessgesellen hat getan*. Bruck an der Thaya, 1604.
- *Der Hutterischen Widertæuffer Taubenkobel. In welchem all ihr Wust, Mist, Kott und Unflat, das ist ihre falsche stinckende unflœtige und abscheuliche Lehren verfasst; auch dess grossen Taubers dess Jacob Hutters Leben*. Ingolstadt, 1607.
- *Vier und funfftzig Erhebliche Ursachen Warumb die Widertæuffer nicht sein im Land zu leyden*. Ingolstadt, 1607.
- Friedmann, R., *Die Briefe der oesterreichischen Tæufer*. Reprint from *Archiv fuer Reformationsgeschichte*, Bd. XXVI, Leipzig, 1929.
- *Die Habaner in der Slowakei*. Wien, 1927.
- "Concerning the True Soldier of Christ. A Hitherto Unknown Tract of the Philippite Brethren in Moravia." *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. V, No. 2.
- Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brueder*. Herausgegeben von den Hutterischen Bruedern in Amerika, durch Rudolf Wolkan. Standoff-Colony bei Macleod, Alberta, Canada, 1923. (The larger Church Chronicle).
- Grimmelshausen, J. C. v., *Der Abenteuerliche Simplicissimus*, 1669. Many reprints.



- Heath, R., *Anabaptism from its Rise at Zwickau to its Fall at Muenster*, London, 1895.
- Hofer, J. M., "The Hutterites." *Tabor College Herald*, October, 1921, Hillsboro, Kansas.
- Horsch, J., "Die Hutterischen Brueder." *Wahrheitsfreund* (Chicago, Ill.), Nos. 16-23, 1927.
- "Die hutterische Bruedergemeinde," *Mennonitische Rundschau* (Winnipeg, Manitoba), Nos. 14-21, 1928.
- [Jedelshauser, H.], *Zwelff wichtige and starke Ursachen Hansen Jedelshausers von Ulm, Warumb er von den Widertauffern, so man Hutterische Brueder nennt, sei abgetreten, dieselben verlassen, sich aber zu der Catholischen Roemischen Kirche bekehrt habe*. Ingolstadt, 1587.
- Kautsky, K., *Vorlaeufer des neueren Sozialismus*, Bd. I, 1895.
- Klaus, A., *Unsere Kolonien; Studien und Materialien zur Geschichte und Statistik der auslaendischen Kolonisation in Russland*. Uebersetzt von Toews. Odessa, 1887.
- Kripp, J. v., "Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Wiedertaeufer in Tirol." *Programm des Staatsgymnasiums in Innsbruck*, 1857.
- Liefmann, R., *Die kommunistischen Gemeinden in Nordamerika*. Jena, 1922.
- Lieder der Hutterischen Brueder. Gesangbuch darinnen viel und mancherlei schoene Betrachtungen, Lehren, Vermahnungen, Lobgesaenge und Glaubensbekenntnisse von vielen Liebhabern Gottes gedichtet und aus vielen Geschichten und Historien der heiligen Schrift zusammengetragen; allen frommen Liebhabern Gottes sehr nuetzlich zu singen und zu lesen*. Scottsdale, Pa., 1914.
- Loesche, G., "Archivalische Beitræge zur Geschichte des Tæufertums und des Protestantismus in Tirol und Voralberg." *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft fuer die Geschichte des Protestantismus im ehemaligen und im neuen Oesterreich*, Bd. XLVII, Wien und Leipzig, 1926. (See Correll.)
- Loserth, J., *Der Anabaptismus in Tirol; von seinen ersten Anfaengen bis zum Tode Huters*. *Archiv fuer oesterreichische Geschichte*, Wien, 1892.
- *Der Anabaptismus in Tirol vom Tode Huters bis zu seinem Erloeschen*. *Archiv fuer oesterreichische Geschichte*, Wien, 1892.
- *Der Communismus der maehrischen Wiedertaeufer im 16 und 17. Jahrhundert. Beitræge zu ihrer Geschichte, Lehre und Verfassung*, *Archiv fuer oesterreichische Geschichte*, Bd. LXI, Wien, 1894.
- *Communisten im sechzehnten und siebzehnten Jahrhundert*. Sonderabdruck aus dem *Grazer Tageblatt*, Graz, 1894.
- "Zwei Briefe des Cardinals Dietrichstein zur Ausweisung der Wiedertaeufer aus Maehren." *Zeitschrift des Vereins fuer die Geschichte von Maehren und Schlesien*, Bd. I, 1897.
- "Zur Geschichte der Wiedertaeufer in Maehren." *Zeitschrift fuer allgemeine Geschichte*, Bd. I, 1884.
- "Deutsch-boehmische Wiedertaeufer," in *Mitteilungen des Vereins fuer Geschichte der Deutschen in Boehmen*, Bd. XXX, No. 4.
- "Wiedertaeufer in Steiermark," in *Mitteilungen des hist. Vereins fuer Steiermark*. Graz, 1894.

- "Zur Geschichte der Wiedertaeufer in Salzburg," in *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft fuer Salzburger Landeskunde*, Salzburg, 1892, No. 1.
- "Zwei Miszellen aus der Wiedertaeuferzeit in Maehren."
- "Zwei biographische Skizzen aus der Zeit der Wiedertaeufer in Tirol." 1895.
- "Recent Research in the History of the Tyrol-Moravian Anabaptists." *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. II, No. 1.
- "The Decline and Revival of the Hutterites." *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, Vol. IV, No. 2.
- Loserth, J., and Beck, J. V., *George Blaurock und die Anfaenge des Anabaptismus in Graubuenden und Tirol; Vortraege und Aufsaezte der Comenius-Gesellschaft*, Bd. VII, 1899.
- Mennonitisches Lexikon*. Herausgegeben von Christian Hege und Christian Neff, Bd. I, Frankfurt a. M. 1913.
- Mueller, J. T., "Die Beruehrungen der Alten und neuen Bruederunitaet mit den Taeufern." *Zeitschrift fuer Bruedergeschichte*, 1910.
- Mueller, L., *Der Kommunismus der maehrischen Wiedertaeufer*, Leipzig, 1927.
- Newman, A. H., *History of Anti-Pedobaptism*. Philadelphia, 1897.
- "Balthasar Hubmaier and the Moravian Anabaptists." *The Goshen College Record Review Supplement*, (Goshen, Ind.), September, 1926.
- [Ryedeman, Peter], *Rechenschaft vnserer Religion, Leer vnd Glaubens, Von den Bruedern so man die Hutterischen nennt aussgangen*.
- The same work. Verlag der Hutterischen Brueder-Gemeinde. Berne, Ind., 1902.
- Saliger, W., "Peter Scherers Rede an die Schulmeister zu Niemtschitz in Maehren, 1578." *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft fuer deutsche Erziehungs- und Schulgeschichte*, Berlin, Bd. XI, No. 2.
- Schoenherr, D. v., *Ein Wiedertaeuferprozess; Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. II, 1901.
- Smith, C. H., *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites*, Berne, Ind., 1927.
- Tschetter, P. W., "Kurze Geschichte der Hutterischen Brueder." *Wahrheitsfreund*, Chicago, 1928, Nos. 12-18.
- Unger, Th., "Ueber eine Wiedertaeufer-Liederhandschrift des 17. Jahrhunderts." *Jahrbuch fuer die Geschichte des Protestantismus in Oesterreich*, Bd. XIII, XV, XVII, XVIII, XX.
- Wiswedel, W., *Bilder und Fuehrergestalten aus dem Taeufertum*. Bd. I and II, Kassel 1928 and 1929.
- Wolkan, R., *Die Lieder der Wiedertaeufer; ein Beitrag zur deutschen und niederlaendischen Literatur und Kirchengeschichte*, Berlin, 1903.
- *Die Hutterer. Oesterreichische Wiedertaeufer und Kommunisten in Amerika*. Wien, 1918.
- Wolny, G., "Die Wiedertaeufer in Maehren." *Archiv fuer die Kunde der oesterreichischen Geschichtsquellen*, Bd. V, 1850.

## LIST OF THE HUTTERIAN BRUDERHOFS—1931\*

The three original Hutterian Bruderhofs established in the state of South Dakota (then Dakota Territory), U. S. A., in 1874 and 1877, have grown until in 1931 the total number of Bruderhofs is thirty-three in addition to the groups that do not practice communism. Of this number but three Bruderhofs are still to be found in South Dakota, while ten are located in Manitoba, Canada, and nineteen in Alberta, Canada. Before the World War all the Bruderhofs were in South Dakota. The movement to the prairie provinces of Canada which began in 1918 was caused by maltreatment at the hands of militant Dakota neighbors during the war.

The present Bruderhofs comprise three general groups of Hutterian Brethren which vary but slightly in a few minor points. The three groups descended from the three original Hutterite settlements in Dakota. The oldest group of eleven Bruderhofs, descendants of the first Hutterite Bruderhof in America established in 1874 at Bon Homme on the Missouri River eighteen miles west of Yankton, is called the "Schmiede-Leut," because the first leader, Michael Waldner, was a "Schmied" (smith). The second group of thirteen Bruderhofs, called the "Darius-Leut" after the first leader, Darius Walter, are descendants of the original Wolf Creek Bruderhof, founded in 1874 near Freeman, South Dakota. The third group of eight Bruderhofs descends from the original Old Elm Spring Bruderhof founded in 1877 near Parkston, South Dakota. This group is called the "Lehrer-Leut" because the two leaders who lead the immigration were "Lehrer" (teachers). The Bruderhofs are listed according to these three groupings. The present total Hutterian population in North America is somewhat more than 3,400 souls.

---

\* This list is taken from Eberhard Arnold's German edition of Bertha W. Clark's pamphlet, *Die Hutterischen Gemeinschaften*, Eberhard Arnold-Verlag, Bruderhof and Leipzig, 1929, together with the data found in Professor Lee E. Deets' paper on "The Origins of Conflict in the Hutterische Communities," Publications of the Sociological Society of America, Vol. XXV, No. 2, May, 1931, p. 128.

## I. SCHMIEDE-LEUT

(Population 1424)

South Dakota, U. S. A.

1. *Bon Homme*, Tabor County. Michael and Joseph Waldner.

Manitoba, Canada.

2. *Milltown*, Benard Siding. Joseph Kleinsasser, Sr. and Joseph Kleinsasser, Jr.
3. *Huron*, Benard Siding. Joseph J. Waldner and Joseph Glanzer.
4. *Bon Homme*, Benard Siding. Joseph M. and Michael Waldner.
5. *James Valley*, Starbuck. David and Peter Hofer.
6. *Rosedale*, Elie. Zacharias and Andreas Hofer.
7. *Iberville*, Elie. Peter Gross.
8. *Maxwell*, Haedingley. Joseph Hofer.
9. *Barrickman*, Haedingley. Samuel Hofer.
10. *Blumengard (Rosengart)*, Plum Coulee. Johann D. Hofer.
11. *Roseisle*, Roseisle. David B. Glanzer.

## II. DARIUS-LEUT

(Population 1185)

South Dakota, U. S. A.

12. *Lake Byron*, Huron. Joseph Stahl.
13. *Wolf Creek*, Sterling. Joshua and Peter Hofer.

Alberta, Canada.

14. *East Cardston*, Cardston. David Hofer.
15. *West Raley*, Raley. Christian Waldner, Sr., and Christian Waldner, Jr.
16. *Stand-Off*, Macleod. Elias Walter.
17. *Wilson Siding*, Lethbridge. Johann Wurz.
18. *Hintz, Stahlville*, Johann Stahl.
19. *Spring Valley*, Rockyford. Jacob Wurz and Paul Hofer.
20. *Rosebud*, Rockyford. George Hofer.
21. *Pincher*, Pincher Station. Jacob Hofer.
22. *Bysieker*, Beiseker. Paul Stahl.
23. *Grenum*, Michael Tschetter.
24. *Morphy*, Joseph Hofer.



## III. LEHRER-LEUT

(Population 874)

South Dakota, U. S. A.

25. *Rockport*, Alexandria, David and Peter Hofer (Moving to Hutterville near Welling, Alberta).

Alberta, Canada

26. *Old Elm Spring*, Warner, Michael J. Entz and Jacob Hofer.
27. *Old Elm Spring*, Magrath. Andreas Gross and Peter Kleinsasser.
28. *Big Bend*, Woolford. John P. Entz and Jacob Wipf.
29. *Milford*, Raymond. Johannes Kleinsasser, Jr. and Johannes Kleinsasser, Sr.
30. *Miama, New Dayton*. George Waldner and Peter Hofer.
31. *New Elmspring*, Magrath. Peter Entz.
32. *Crystal Spring*, Magrath. John J. Entz.
33. *Rockport*, Magrath, Joseph Wipf.

Germany

34. *Neuhof* near Fulda, Germany, Dr. Eberhard Arnold.



Places of Important Hutterian Settlements in Moravia and Hungary  
(now Czechoslovakia).



Moravia and Adjoining Provinces





## INDEX

- Accusations against Swiss Brethren, 2  
 Aichele, imperial provost, 42  
 Alberta, 115  
 Aleckowitz, 62, 63  
 Alexander I, Czar, 113  
 Altmarkt, 62  
 Alwintz, 56, 57, 63, 69, 74, 75, 90, 108, 149  
 America, 115, 147, 149  
 Anabaptists, 1, 2, 6, 13, 15  
 Anabaptist sects, 1, 119, 121  
 Anabaptists outlawed, 3  
 "Anabaptist stomachs," 38  
 Andreae, J. V., 41  
*Anschlag und Fuerwenden der Gottlosen*, 126, 131  
 Apostolic Creed, 117  
 Apostolic period, 20  
 Armenians, 102  
 Arms, making of, 137  
 Arndt, J., 99  
 Ascherham, G., 5, 10  
 Augsburg Confession, 100, 112  
 Auspitz, 76  
 Austerlitz, 8, 10  
 Austerlitz Brethren, 9, 130  
 Austria, 4, 23, 42, 51, 65, 86, 108, 111  
 Bader, A., 1  
 Baptism of believers, 1, 2  
 Baptism of blood, 41  
 Baptism, infant, 1-3, 12, 16, 123  
 Basel, 3, 12  
 Batenburg, J. v.  
 Bavaria, 29, 40  
 Beck, J. v., 11, 26, 29, 32, 33, 52, 65, 69, 81, 84, 116, 117, 130, 140, 147, 149  
 Bergmann, C., 11  
 "Bishop," 9  
 Blaauermel, P., 5  
 Blaurock, G., 9, 70  
 Bodok in Upper Hungary, Bruderhof at, 68  
 Boehmer, H., 119, 150  
 Bogenitz, 7, 8, 10  
 Bohemia 11, 23, 53, 93  
 Bohemian Brethren, 11  
 Bon Homme colony, 115  
 Books confiscated, 80  
 Books, hidden, 113  
 Bossert, G., 4, 27, 121  
 Braght, T. J. v., 45  
 Braidl, C., 32, 70, 139  
 Braitmichel, C., 7, 29, 149  
 Breitensteiner, J., 61  
 Brenz, J., 121, 122  
 British Museum, 32  
 Brixen in the Tyrol, 42  
 Brussels, 129  
 Bucer, M., 8, 9, 132  
 Bullinger, H., 8, 41, 126  
 Cadoux, C. J., 133  
 Caesarea, 122  
 Caiaphas, 9  
 Calumnies, 139  
 Calvinism, 12  
 Canada, 145  
 Canada, western, 115  
 Carinthia in Austria, 57, 99, 108, 110, 111  
 Carpathian mountains, 104  
 Catholicism, 109  
 Certainty, religious, 144  
 Charles V., Emperor, 17  
 Christening, 12  
 Church and State, separation of, 146  
 Church buildings for worship, 147  
 Church discipline, 145  
 Church of England, 9  
 Church, the, doctrine of, 128  
 Clark, B. W., 26, 118, 145, 147  
 Clothes, making of, 138  
 Colonies, Mennonite, in Russia, 114  
 Colonization, a forced, 56  
 Communism, 4, 5, 8  
 Communism, "red," 4  
 Community life prized, 70

- Community of goods abandoned, 75, 114
- Community of goods, Christian, 117
- Community of goods, nature of, 131
- Compromise, 48
- Compulsory church membership, 2, 12, 146
- Confession of Faith, 118
- Consecration to God's service, 8
- Cornelius, C. A., 5
- Cornies, Johann, 114
- Correll, E., 8, 69
- Creutz, village of, 92, 93, 149
- Croatia, 63
- Czechoslovakia, 4, 17, 112
- Czechoslovakian archives, 81
- Czolsch, schoolmaster, 112
- Daemorschitz, 62
- Dakota, 115
- Dancing, 143
- Davidites, 1
- Decline of the Brotherhood, 70, 71
- "Deformation of the church," 20
- Delpini, Jesuit, 89, 102, 105, 111
- Denck, H., 146
- Denominations, economic roots of, 3, 4
- Der Hutterischen Brueder Antwort*, 132
- Desna River, 107, 114
- Dietrichstein, A. v., 52, 64, 65
- Dietrichstein, Cardinal Franz von, 58, 140
- Discussions between Zwingli and Swiss Brethren, 2
- Dissenters, 2
- Divorce, 142
- Dominic, Saint, 68
- Doria, A., 46, 47
- Drinking houses, 138
- Early Christian Attitude to War, 133
- Economic roots of denominations, 3, 4
- Education, religious, 34
- Ehrenpreis, A., 70, 73, 74, 129, 133, 140, 141
- Elector Palatine, 69
- Elenchus*, book of Zwingli, 126
- Elbing, West Prussia, 69
- Elm Spring colony, 115
- Emperor, German, 37
- Engeten, 92
- Erhard, C., 26
- Esch, J., 129
- Excommunication, 21
- Executions, secret, 43
- Execution threatened without trial or sentence, 64
- Expulsion from Moravia, 57-62
- "Faith a gift of God," 14
- Falkenstein, castle, 44, 45, 130, 149
- Famines, 65, 140
- Famine sufferers fed, 65
- Farkenschin, 63
- Feasting, immoderate, 143
- Felbinger, C., 29, 125, 126
- Feldsberg in Lower Austria, 14
- Ferdinand, Emperor, 60
- Ferdinand, King of Austria, 15, 17, 45, 53
- Fischer, C. A., 9, 10, 14, 15, 21, 26, 27, 29-32, 37, 38, 52, 119, 139, 147, 149
- Flacius, M., 132
- Flanders, 75
- Flight of Brotherhood, 16-18, 85, 98, 102, 103-106
- Francis, Saint, 68
- Franz, Count von Thurn, 143
- Franz von Praentsch, 17, 18
- Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, 48
- Free love, accusation of, 44
- Friedmann, R., 81, 112
- Friesland, 75
- Fuenfkircher, H., 46
- Gabor, Bethlen, 56
- Gabrielite Brethren, 5
- Galleys, sentenced to, 45
- General council, 5
- General toleration within the church, 13
- Germanic countries, 24
- German imperial forces, 54
- Germany, northwestern, 16
- Germany, 18, 19, 57, 108
- Geschichtbuch der Hutterischen Brueder* (The Larger Church Chronicle), 4, 7, 16, 20, 26, 31, 33, 38, 39, 45, 51, 55, 58-60, 63, 64, 108, 122, 123, 127, 129-132, 136, 140, 141, 142, 144, 149

- Glock, P., 27, 47  
 Gluchow, 107  
 Gmuend in Upper Austria, 118  
 Gnadenfrei in Saxony, 109  
 Goeding, 60  
 Gostel, 62  
 Government, civil, 133-135  
 Government, obedience to, 21  
 Gran in Upper Hungary, mon-  
   astery at, 84, 88, 89  
 Grebel, C., 2  
 Greek Orthodox, 102  
 Griesinger, Offrus, 43  
 Grimmelshausen, H. J. C., 66  
 Habaner, 112  
 Hand-Buechel, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125,  
   126  
 Hapsburg, house of, 53  
 Hattin, 107  
 Hausser, J., 132  
 Heathen, 147  
 "Heathenism," 39  
 Hege, Chr., 121  
 Hermannstadt, 90, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97,  
   101, 102, 103, 105, 108, 111  
 Herod, 134  
 Herrnhut, 107  
 Hesse, 127  
 Hirschfeld in Silesia, 118  
 Hirtzel, R., 9, 58-60  
 Hofer, Christian, 109  
 Hofer, Joseph, 115  
 Hofer, Matthias, 99, 100  
 Hofer, Michael, 115  
 Hohenwittlingen, 27, 47  
 Holland, 75  
 Holl, K., 119  
 Holstein, 6  
 Homberg, 127  
 Horsch, J., 122  
 Hospitality, 138  
 Hubmaier, B., 5-7, 11  
 Hulshof, A., 8  
 Hungarian archives, 80  
 Hungarians, invasion of, 52  
 Hungarian Landtag, 64  
 Hungarian mountains, 55, 56  
 Hungary, 9, 17-19, 23, 51, 55, 63, 64,  
   66, 74, 89, 97, 108-112, 149  
 Hungary, great persecution in, 79  
 Hurst, J. F., 1  
 Huss, J., 11  
 Hussites, 11  
 Hutterdorf, 114  
 Hutterian life described by Grim-  
   melshausen, 66-68  
 Hutterian Opinion of Muensterites, 16  
 Hutter, J., 1, 8, 9, 70, 136  
 Huttertal, 114  
 Hymns of the Hutterian Church, 22  
 Ideal of love and consecration, 20  
 "Ideal Period" of the Brotherhood, 19  
 Impotence, religious, 42  
 Industries in the Bruderhofs, 23, 114  
 Infant baptism, 1-3, 12, 16, 123  
 Inns, 138  
 Innsbruck, 9  
 Intolerance of state church Prot-  
   estantism, 48-50  
 Italy, 37  
 Jedelshauser, H., 27  
 Jerusalem, 132  
 Jesuits, 48, 53, 60, 75, 79-81, 108, 109,  
   112  
 Jews, 12, 30, 32, 102, 147  
 Johannesruh, 114  
 John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, 17  
 Joppa, 122  
 Joris, D., 1  
 Joseph II, Emperor, 108-110  
 Kaels, J., 33, 130  
 Kaunitz, Lords von, 8, 9, 10  
 Kaunitz, Ulrich von, 11  
 Keller, L., 13  
 Kengel, B., 122  
 Kesselsdorf, 63, 65, 77  
 Kessler, J., 18  
 Kindergarten, 33, 35  
 Klausenburg, 92  
 Klausen in the Tyrol, 9, 70  
 Kleinsasser, H., 100, 101  
 Kolonitsch, Cardinal Leopold von, 75  
 Komorn, 84  
 Kraehbach, 106  
 Krael, H., 149  
 Kronstadt, 103  
 Kuehn, H., 84  
 Kuentsch, H. F., 65  
 Kuhr, J., 90, 95, 97, 98, 101, 102  
 Kurpfalz, 121  
 Kurtz, J. H., 20

- Lang, Hans, 45  
 Lawsuits forbidden, 138  
 Leiden, J. v., 1  
 Levar, 63, 69, 75, 79, 82-88, 108, 109, 112  
 Liberty of conscience, 10, 18, 48  
 Library, Mennonite, in Amsterdam, 33  
 Liechtenstein, L. v., 5, 7, 11  
 Life in the Hutterian Communities, 21-26  
 Living in caverns, 18  
 Loesche, Prof., 15  
 Loserth, J., 5, 15, 27, 72, 81, 149  
 Lutheran church, 112  
 Luther, M., 32, 48-50, 99, 120, 127, 135  
 Luxuries, 8  
 Macleod, Alta., 4, 149  
 Maendel, H., 40  
 Mandates, imperial, 44  
 Manitoba, 115  
 Mannheim in the Palatinate, colony at, 69  
 Manz, F., 2  
 Maria Theresa, Empress, 79, 81, 86, 89, 90, 99, 102, 105, 108, 110  
 "Martyrs' Gallery," 39  
 Marx, K., 5  
 Maskowitz, 62, 63  
 Masons, 146  
 Mass, the, 4, 49  
 Mau, W., 5  
 Melanchthon, P., 121, 122  
 Mennonite Historical Library, Scottdale, Pa., 14, 27, 32  
 Mennonites, 1, 4, 6, 13, 75, 113, 121, 129  
 Mennonitisches Lexikon, 10, 27, 33, 42  
 Menno Simons, 6, 10, 40  
 Miller, P., 93  
 Ministry, unsalaried, 3  
 Missionary endeavors, 27-29  
 Missionary hymn, 28  
 Mission work, 57, 122  
 Modesty in attire, 25  
 Mohammed, 147  
 Moldavia, 102, 107  
 Molotschna river, 113, 114  
 Moos near Bruneck, 8  
 Moravia a Slavic country, 19  
 Moravian Church, 111, 112  
 Moravian nobles, 14, 15, 17  
 Mueller, E., 8  
 Mueller, H., 83, 84, 88  
 Mueller, Joseph, 101, 109  
 Mueller, L., 11, 119, 128, 146  
 Muensterites, 2, 4, 15, 16, 121  
 Muenzer, Th, 119  
 Music, instrumental, 147  
 Nadler, H., 5  
 Near-communism, 8  
 Nero, 134  
 Netherlands, 6, 10, 75  
 Neubauer, S. L., 69  
 Neu-Huttertal, 114  
 Neumuehl, 59  
 Newmann, A. H., 44  
 Niebuhr, H. R., 3, 4, 6  
 Niederlander, O., 127  
 Niemschitz, 34, 60  
 Nikolsburg, 5, 6, 10, 11, 52, 58, 59  
 Nobles, Moravian, 140  
 Nonresistance, principle of, 2, 3, 5, 11, 21, 115, 133  
 North Dakota, 115  
 North Germany, 6  
 Nuremberg, 118  
 Nurses, 38  
 Nussbach, 103  
 Nyari, Count, 81  
 Oecolampad, J., 12  
 Ofen, Jesuit monastery at, 84  
 Olmuetz, 58  
 Ordnungen, 74, 130  
 Organization, present-day, of Hutterian communities, 146  
 Origin of Hutterian church, 6  
 Ostracism, social, 3  
 Palatine, Count 43  
 Paretschin, 106  
 Pauck, W., 132  
 Pausram, 60  
 Peasants' War, 119  
 Persecution, cause of, 12, 13  
 Persecutions, 2, 3, 9, 28, 127, 140, 145  
 Persecution of 1535, 15, 76  
 Persecution of 1547, 17, 76  
 Persecution, cause of, 12, 13  
 Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, 17  
 Philippite Brethren, 5, 44, 130  
 Physicians of the Brethren, 37  
 Picards, 11, 112  
 Piechowski, P., 5



Pilate, 9, 134  
 Plener, P., 5  
 Polygamy, 16  
 Prague, 37  
 Pressburg, 63, 109, 113  
 Pribitz, 56 persons murdered, 54  
 Profanity as evidence of apostasy  
     from Hutterianism, 40  
 Protestantism, 2  
 Provost, imperial, 46  
 Provost, royal, 42  
 Prussia, 113  
 Pulman H., 84  
 Pulman, T., 84  
  
 Raab, 84  
 Rakoczy, Prince, 68  
*Reichenschaft* (Riedemann), 34, 118,  
     120, 122, 124, 125, 128, 136-139  
 Reditshaw, 113, 114  
 Reformation, history of, 1  
 Reformation introduced by civil au-  
     thorities, 48-50  
 Reformed Church, 4  
 Refuge under Moslem rule, 48  
 Reichstag, German, 3  
 Reichstag of Speyer, 13  
 Remorse of those fallen away, 26  
 Repes, 103  
 Revelations, new 2  
 Riedemann, P., 45, 70, 118, 124, 125,  
     128  
 Ritualism, 147  
 Roman Catholic Church, 4, 6, 10, 12,  
     47-49, 109  
 Romanzov, Russian field marshal,  
     107, 113  
 Rorer, C., 132  
 Roth M., 92, 94, 95, 101  
 Rumania, 48, 102  
 Russia, 106-108, 111, 149  
  
 Sabatisch, 17, 18, 55, 63, 75, 78-89, 108,  
     113, 122, 149  
 Sabbatarians, 7  
 Sachsse, C., 5  
 Sametin, Russian general, 107  
 Sanitary regulations, 36  
 Saxony, 48, 49, 112, 119  
 Scandinavia, 9  
 Schaechtitz, 55, 56  
 Schaerding in Bavaria, 5

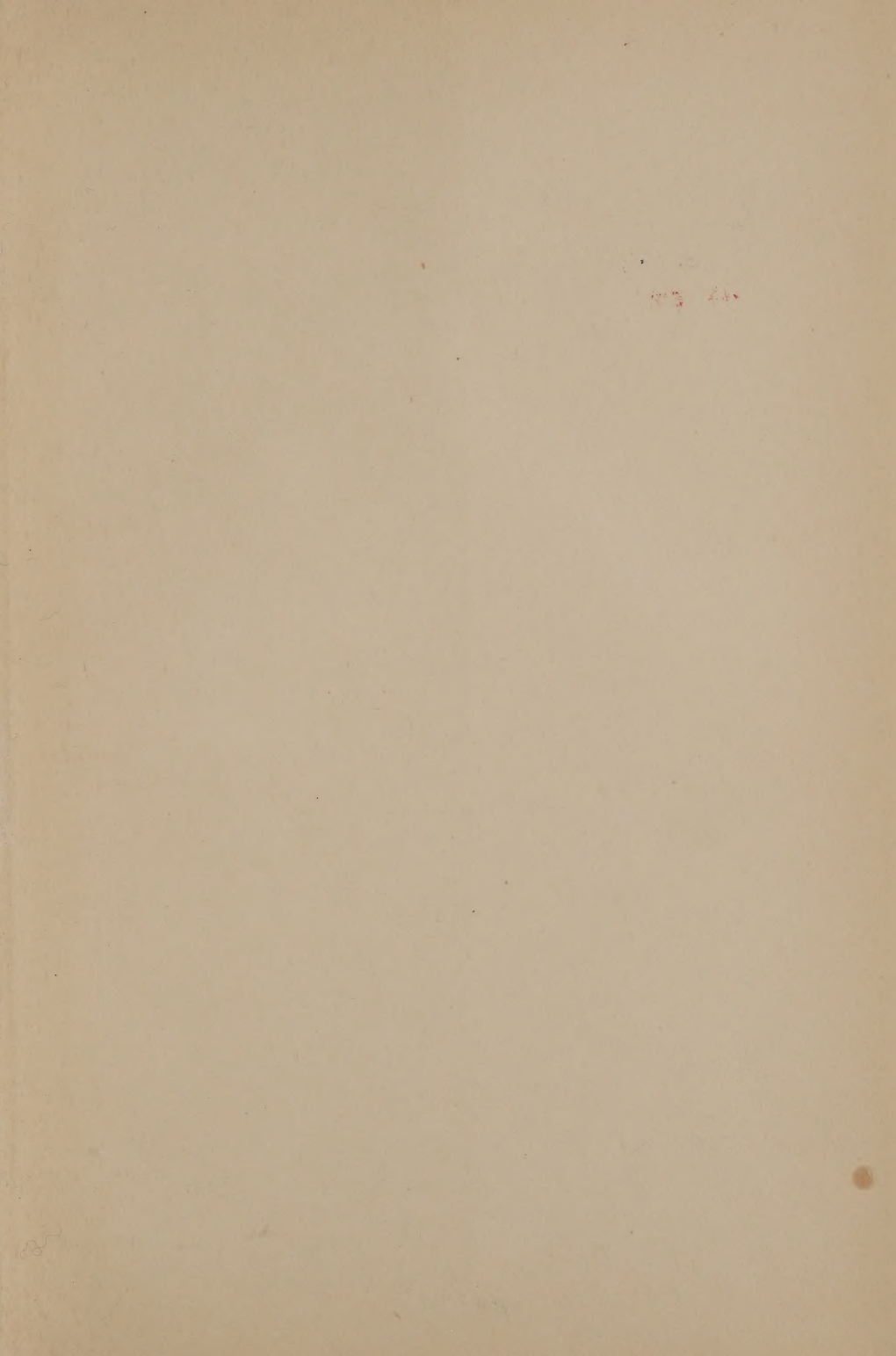
Schaidberger, J., 99  
 Schlaffer, H., 5  
 Schmid, H., 87  
 "School mothers," 34  
 Schools of the Brethren, 33  
 Schreiber, H., 5  
*Schulordnung*, 34, 130  
 Schwatz in the Tyrol, 5  
 Schwenckfeld, C., 40  
 Scripture, authority of, 2, 119  
 Seiler, H., 8  
 Senica, 17  
 Silesia, 70, 118  
 Simons, M., 6  
*Simplicissimus*, 66  
 Sin and salvation, 123  
 Sin, original, 123, 124  
 Sleeping while walking, 104  
 Slovakia, 112  
 Smalkaldian League, 17  
 Smalkaldian War 17  
 Smaller Church Chronicle, 149  
 Smith, C. H., 115  
*Social Sources of Denominational-*  
     *ism*, 3, 4  
 South Dakota, 115, 116  
 South Germany, 6  
 Spain, 37  
 Spanish troops, 54  
 Spittelmeyer, H., 7  
 Stahl, Johannes, 92, 95, 97, 98, 102  
 Stahl, Judith, 95  
 "Standing still," 5, 6  
 State church (Protestantism intoler-  
     ant, 48-50  
 Steinabrunn in Austria, 44  
 Sterzing, 39  
 St. Johann, 63, 113  
 Strasburg, 8  
 Strasser, G., 8  
 Stutz, J., 92, 93, 97  
 Suabia, 42  
 Susanna Carolina, princess, 57  
 Swiss Brethren, 1-6, 8, 11, 13, 40, 120,  
     121, 126, 128, 134  
 Swiss Brethren, doctrine of, 8, 9  
 Swiss Reformed Church, German, 18  
 Switzerland, 18, 19  
 Swords, making of, 137  
  
 Tampier, General, 53  
 Szobotiste, 17  
 Tartars, invasion of, 52, 75, 78

- Taxes, 137, 138  
 Thirty Years' War, 53, 72  
 Toleration, 10, 12, 14, 47, 146  
 Toleration, edict of, 109  
 Toleration in Moravia, 13  
 Tortures, horrible, in Thirty Years' War, 54  
 Torture, manner of, in persecution, 39  
 Tracht, 60, 61  
 Transylvania, 51, 56, 60, 69, 74, 76, 89, 97, 108, 111, 149  
 Treasure, supposed, of Hutterians, 139  
 Trenchment, 105  
 Trentschin, 79  
 Tribulation, joy in, 43  
 Tschekowitz, 69  
 Trieste, 46, 47, 149  
 Tschetterle, A., 82  
 Tschetterle, L., 95, 97  
 Tschoregirle, 106  
 Tuchmacher A., 40  
 Turkey, 51, 52, 106  
 Turkish Emperor, 102  
 Turkish wars, 72, 74, 78  
 Turks, invasion of, 52  
 Turks, 61  
 Tyrnau  
 Tyrol, 1, 6, 9  
 Tyrol, persecution in, 43  
 Ukraine, 107  
 Uncompromising Attitude, 143  
 "Under the cross," 39  
 Union of church and state, 2, 10, 12-14, 50  
 Unitarians, 132  
 Unitas Fratrum, 112  
*Unter-Richtung*, 132  
 Upper Austria, 118  
 Vedder, H. C., 5  
*Verantwortung den Schweizern gegen*, 128, 142  
 Vienna, 5, 7, 14, 15, 33, 45, 89, 102, 109, 110, 129, 130, 140, 141  
 "Violent revolution," 4  
 Voes, H., 129  
 Voluntary principle, 14  
 Waldner, G., 100, 101  
 Waldner, J., chronicler, 73, 79, 101, 107  
 Waldner, Michael, 114  
 Wallachia, 48, 57, 76, 97, 102, 107, 111, 149  
 Wallenstein, Imperial Generalissimo, 65  
 Walloon troops, 54  
 Walpot, P., 34, 70, 128, 132  
 Walter, Darius, 114  
 Walter, E., 149  
 Walter, F., 57  
 Walter, J., 109, 112  
 Walter, Z., 84  
 War taxes, 7, 21, 53  
 Wartburg castle, 48  
 Wastnitz, 143, 144  
 Weber, J., 93  
 Weidowitz, 55, 56  
 Wenglen in Prussia, 132  
 Wernle, P., 1  
 Westphalia, 16  
 White Mountain, battle of, 53  
*Widerlegung und Antwort*, 131, 142  
 Wipf, A., 94  
 Wipf, M., 82, 93  
 Wischenka, 107-109, 112-114  
 Wisternitz, 61  
 Wiswedel, W., 125, 126  
 Wolfscreek colony, 115  
 Wolkan, R., 149  
 Wolkersdorf in Hesse, 118  
 World War, 115  
 Worms, city of, 120  
 Worship, simplicity of, 147  
 Wuerttemberg, 19, 47, 121  
 Wuerttemberg, Duke of, 47  
 Wurz, A., 100, 102  
 Zapff, H., 149  
 Zaunring, George, 9  
 Zealand, 75  
 Zemplin, comitat of, 68  
 Zierotin, F. v., 52, 130, 141  
 Zinzendorf, Count, 11, 109  
 Zobel, G., 37  
 Zurich, 4, 8, 41, 48, 49  
 Zwickau Prophets, 119  
 Zwingli, U., 2, 41, 48, 50, 126, 132  
 Zwingli's book *Elenchus*, 3









# Date Due

Ag 1 2 '40			
<del>AP 21 52</del>	<del>MAY 2 2 1985</del>		
<del>DEC 2 0 77</del>	<del>MAY 05 1990</del>		
<del>JAN 1 1 82</del>	<del>MAY 10 2002</del>		
<del>MAY 4 '64</del>	APR 09 2015		
<del>FACULTY</del>			
<del>JAN 1 1 70</del>			
<del>JAN 1 1 70</del>			
<del>NOV 2 2 1975</del>			
<del>MAY 2 2 '81</del>			



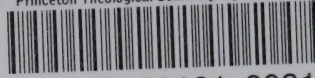




BX8129 .H8H8

The Hutterian Brethern, 1528-1931 : a

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00131 8031